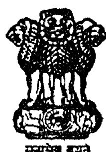


WITH JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AT SEVAGRAM

THE COLLECTED WORKS OF
MAHATMA GANDHI

LXIII

(June 1 – November 2, 1936)



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PREFACE

The present volume (June 1—November 2, 1936) marks a further stage in Gandhiji's village uplift programme. After his return from Nandi Hill in Mysore where he had gone for a short rest, Gandhiji went and settled in Segaon, a small village near Wardha with a population of barely 600, in order to live amongst the poor and "show them how to live" (p. 417) by personal example and service rather than by preaching (p. 347). He had gone there with the "resolve not to desert it in the hour of danger to life or limb" (p 297) and remained true to his word. Except for the first two weeks in June and the last week in October, when he had to go out to meet commitments made earlier, Gandhiji remained, throughout the period covered in this volume, in Segaon, combating age-old ignorance, disease and superstition and doing what he could to make the place livable. This *sadhana*, as Gandhiji described it (p. 295), took its toll and he came under an attack of malaria which forced him to seek admission to a hospital in Wardha.

Gandhiji's physical retreat to a village coincided with a deepening crisis in Europe where, with the outbreak of civil war in Spain in July, the stage was being set for World War II. In India, too, a Socialist Party with a programme of economic reconstruction through class struggle had been formed in the Congress, and now Jawaharlal, who had taken over as President of the Indian National Congress in the preceding April, started vigorously advocating a similar programme. Gandhiji agreed with the broad aims of Nehru's policy. "His enunciation of scientific socialism," Gandhiji told two foreign visitors, "does not jar on me. I have been living the life since 1906 that he would have all India to live" (p. 207). But with his own understanding of the realities of the Indian situation and his firm faith in a village-oriented economy, Gandhiji could not endorse all that Nehru seemed to be advocating. "My difficulty," Gandhiji explained in a letter to Nehru, "is not about the remote future. . . . If the present is well taken care of, the future will take care of itself" (p. 180) These differences of outlook between Gandhiji and Jawaharlal, however, did not diminish their mutual affection. A report that he had complained that Nehru's programme had ruined his life-work, Gandhiji described as "a lie, an absolute lie" (p. 207). Scouting another suggestion that he and Nehru

were rivals, he commented: "If we are, we are rivals in making love to each other in the pursuit of the common goal" (p. 165).

Like Gandhiji, some of Jawaharlal's colleagues in the Working Committee, too, did not share his ideas about socialism and they sent in their resignations. Their action led to a minor crisis in national politics which was resolved only through Gandhiji's intervention. While, on the one hand, he persuaded the Working Committee members who had resigned to withdraw their resignations, he also wrote to Jawaharlal Nehru pointing out to him, with the frankness of mutual love and confidence, how these colleagues dreaded him because of his irritability and impatience of them. "They have chafed under your rebukes and magisterial manner and . . . your arrogation of what has appeared to them your infallibility and superior knowledge." They could not, therefore, "speak out" to him "freely and fearlessly," as Gandhiji advised them to do (pp 144-5).

An important subject on which Jawaharlal's pronouncements had created what Gandhiji described as "A False Alarm" was the place of khadi in national economy. Nehru believed that "khadi was an important item in our present programme and must be encouraged", but he "did not think that it could finally solve our poverty problem." He was in "favour of big industry", though he agreed that "even with the increase of industrialization there would be considerable room for the development of cottage industries in India" (p. 16) Gandhiji believed, as against this, that "khadi must hold the field for any length of time that we can think of". It was true that khadi could not compete with mill-manufactured cloth, for, as Gandhiji pointed out, in "the open market a more organized industry will always be able to drive out a less organized one . . ." But the human cost of the displacement of manual labour by power-driven machinery must also be taken into account. As Gandhiji put it: "No Chengis Khan could devise a more ingenious or more profitable method of destroying these villages." The villagers were "fast losing the will to work, to think and even to live. It is a living death that they are living" (pp 77-8). Gandhiji, therefore, was "building up a new economics" through khadi and the village industries. "Conditions," he said, "differ from country to country. . . . the rich and the poor have their own economics" (p. 95).

Another problem of the present which Gandhiji "concentrated upon" was that of eradication of untouchability. It was essentially a religious problem but had, since Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's Communal Award against which Gandhiji had fasted in September

1932 (*vide* Vol. LI), acquired a political colour. Leaders of the different religions in India had started competing with one another "for enticing Harijans into their fold" and there were attempts by Ambedkar and others to detach Harijans from the rest of the Hindus through mass conversion to another faith. Some Hindu leaders like Dr. Moonje were willing to countenance this provided the conversion was to Sikhism. Gandhiji deplored this bargaining for the transfer of Harijans "as if they were chattel". Who are we, he asked, "the self-constituted leaders, to barter away the religious freedom of Harijans?" "By looking at it in terms of politics or economics," he explained, "they reduce the religious values, whereas the proper thing would be to estimate politics and every other thing in terms of religion" (pp. 234-5).

From a purely religious point of view, Gandhiji recognized Ambedkar's threefold indictment of Hinduism in regard to the practice of untouchability—"inhuman conduct itself, the unabashed justification for it on the part of the perpetrators, and the subsequent discovery that the justification was warranted by their scriptures" (p. 135). Gandhiji himself had been saying for a long time that if untouchability lived Hinduism would perish, and further that "it ought to perish if this blot on humanity is not removed" (p. 50). Gandhiji knew, however, that untouchability was no part of Hinduism. Refusing to accept as authentic the texts which Ambedkar had quoted, Gandhiji said: "The scriptures properly so called can only be concerned with eternal verities. Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason or is [not] capable of being spiritually experienced." Religion, Gandhiji said, does not live by learning "It lives in the experiences of its saints and seers, in their lives and sayings." "A religion has to be judged not by its worst specimens but by the best it might have produced. For that and that alone can be used as the standard to aspire to, if not to improve upon" (pp. 153-4).

While defining the essence of Hinduism as consisting of truth and ahimsa, Gandhiji also recognized the need for living symbols embodying human ideals. He was quite sure that "if a man does not believe in Rama and Krishna as God he is not a Hindu". Gandhiji himself worshipped "the living Rama and Krishna, the incarnation of all that is True and Good and Perfect", "who exist today, who have existed for all time, who know my innermost thoughts and who continually correct me" (p. 45). For Gandhiji, therefore, temple-worship was not a superstition. There was, he said, something "holy and true about the faith that takes millions

to the temples" (p. 39). From Gandhiji's point of view, temple-entry was thus an essential aspect of the movement against untouchability. He did not agree with those who believed that the "Harijan problem is in the last analysis an economic problem . ." For him it was essentially a problem "of the eradication of a disease in Hinduism" (p. 44). And it would be cured only when all the temples had been thrown open to the Harijans.

Service of the Harijans and of the poor was for Gandhiji part of his search for God. Speaking at a labourer's meeting he said: "There is only one joy for me and that is to get a glimpse of God. This will be possible when I become one with the poor. I can be one with the whole world if I can merge myself in the poor people of a poor country" (p. 406). "Man's ultimate aim," Gandhiji told Maurice Frydman, a Polish engineer, "is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God . . . the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it." "This," Gandhiji added, "can only be done by service of all", which meant service of one's countrymen who were one's "nearest neighbours" (p. 240). As he explained to a sadhu, "We can but serve that part of God's creation which is nearest and best known to us" (p. 233). For such total dedication to service it was necessary to realize that "all souls are one. Plurality . . . is only an illusion . . . the responsibility of the misconduct of anyone falls on all of us" (p. 117).

It was in pursuit of this desire to become one with the poor that Gandhiji had gone to settle in Segaon, a typical Indian village "with no post-office, no store for food-stuffs of quality, no medical comforts and difficult of access in the rainy season" (p. 69). To Frydman's doubt whether it was necessary for self-advance to identify oneself with such "discomfort and squalor", Gandhiji replied that a "certain degree of physical harmony and comfort" might be necessary, but that the "satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs, of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness" and hinders a man "in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated" (pp. 240-1).

Service of the poor undertaken as a spiritual discipline required careful attention to details and facts For any reform the "most important thing" was "a complete picture of the facts". Workers, Gandhiji said, "should not exaggerate facts" (p. 118). We "approach eternal verities," he wrote to a correspondent,

"only by tackling details in terms thereof . . . whatever glimpses I may have of truth I owe principally, if not entirely, to attention to the minutest details, always keeping the supreme objective" of truth and ahimsa and service "in view" (p. 126). In Mirabehn Gandhiji had found such an ideal worker The hut she had built for herself in Segaon was "really and truly," he said, "HER hut," "planned and built by herself." It was not merely a hut, it was a poem Gandhiji shed "tears of joy" as he "saw the villager's mentality about everything in it" (p. 152). He urged workers in the cause of Harijan service to approach their work in a similar spirit of dedication. They should go to the Harijans, themselves become "Harijans in every sense of the term", i. e., serve them, share their joys and sorrows (p. 50) and work as they worked, setting out "every morning like the Bhangis with brooms, spades and baskets" to "do the sweeping, remove the night-soil and bury it" (p. 162). Moral purity was equally important "However accomplished a man," Gandhiji wrote to A. V. Thakkar, "if he is immoral the splashes from the mud of his immorality are bound to stain public life" (p. 289). When they had enough such "selfless, spiritually-minded" workers, then alone would the change of heart necessary for removal of untouchability come (p. 181).

To a correspondent who doubted the value of belief in God "if we do not feel His presence in our midst", Gandhiji gave the reply of the Upanishads: "We must ever fail to perceive Him through the senses, because He is beyond them. We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves from the senses." "The divine music," he added, "is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud senses drown the delicate music . . ." (pp. 57-8). He himself, Gandhiji explained to a girl correspondent, experienced "every moment the presence of the *atman*" and therefore occasionally caught "the echoes" of that "music". With effort, he told her, she, too, could hear it if she wished, but it was not "the music that another can help one hear" (p. 139). Gandhiji believed with similar conviction of direct experience that "love is the source and end of life" "If love was not the law of life," he replied to a *Statesman* writer, "life would not have persisted in the midst of death." And when the practice of the law became universal, "God will reign on earth as He does in Heaven." It was true that both earth and heaven were within us, but, said Gandhiji, "We know the earth, we are strangers to the Heaven within us", and if it was possible for some to realize it, it must be possible for all to do so. This law of

love, which was the true "Science of Life", could not be proved by argument. "It shall be proved," Gandhiji said, "by persons living it in their lives in utter disregard of consequences to themselves" (pp. 320-1).

Presiding over the Gujarati Literary Conference, Gandhiji reminded men of letters of their duty to the masses. He thought of "Segaon and its folk", and couldn't "help saying that our literature is a miserable affair" He wanted "art and literature that can speak to the millions" (p. 416). Protesting against the flood of cheap erotic literature, he suggested to the writers: ". . . before you put your pens to paper keep your mother before your eyes. If you do that the literature which will flow from your pen will be like the rain which nurtures the thirsty mother earth" (p. 421). Writing, according to Gandhiji, was not only a matter of skill. It had to be sincere. To a correspondent who had sent some articles for publication in *Harijan* he wrote: " . . . the simplest writings of earnest persons are effective when brilliant writings of mere clever people fall flat. Words seem to take the vitality of their writers or speakers" (p. 177).

In May Gandhiji had lost his dear friend, Dr. M. A. Ansari. Soon after that loss came the death, on June 9, of another Muslim friend, Abbas Tyabji, who was, Gandhiji wrote, "no ordinary Mussalman . . . He was a servant of India because he was a servant of humanity. He believed in God as *Daridra-narayana*" (p 76). Another personal sorrow which tried Gandhiji about this time was the conversion to Islam of his eldest son Harilal. Gandhiji was not pained by the conversion itself. If it had been "from the heart and free from any worldly considerations," he wrote, "I should have no quarrel. For I believe Islam to be as true a religion as my own." Gandhiji was hurt, and deeply, by the public rejoicing over the incident by a section of the Muslims. "I sense," he said, "no religious spirit behind this demonstration" (pp 5 and 7). The public letter to the Muslims in which Gandhiji explained this was written, he told a Polish visitor, "with my pen dipped in my heart's blood" (p. 48), and he also wrote to a Muslim friend, asking him to "study this phenomenon . . . for the sake of religion and this unhappy land" (p. 23).

In the course of a discussion with a group of Christian missionaries, Gandhiji put his attitude to conversion in a nutshell: "Because you adore your mother, you cannot wish that all the rest were your mother's children" (p. 91).

NOTE TO THE READER

In reproducing English material, every endeavour has been made to adhere strictly to the original. Obvious typographical errors have been corrected and words abbreviated in the text generally spelt out. Variant spellings of names have, however, been retained as in the original.

Matter in square brackets has been supplied by the Editors. Quoted passages, where these are in English, have been set up in small type and printed with an indent. Indirect reports of speeches and interviews, as also passages which are not by Gandhiji, have been set up in small type. In reports of speeches and interviews slight changes and omissions, where necessary, have been made in passages not attributed to Gandhiji.

While translating from Gujarati and Hindi, every effort has been made to achieve fidelity and also readability in English. Where English translations are available, they have been used with such changes as were necessary to bring them into conformity with the original.

The date of an item has been indicated at the top right-hand corner; if the original is undated, the inferred date is supplied within square brackets, the reasons being given where necessary. The date given at the end of an item alongside the source is that of publication. The writings are placed under the date of publication, except where they carry a date-line or where the date of writing has special significance and is ascertainable.

References to Volume I of this series are to the January 1969 edition.

In the source-line, the symbol S.N. stands for documents available in the Sabarmati Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad; G.N. refers to documents, M M.U. to the reels of the Mobile Microfilm Unit and S G. to the photostats of the Sevagram collection available in the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi and Sangrahalaya, New Delhi; C.W. denotes documents secured by the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi.

The Appendices provide background material relevant to the text. A list of sources and a chronology for the period covered by the volume are also provided at the end.

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For research and reference facilities, we owe thanks to the Research and Reference Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, National Archives of India, and Shri Pyarelal Nayyar, New Delhi; and for assisting in photo-printing documents to the Photo Division of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, New Delhi.

CONTENTS

1. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL COLONY, BANGALORE[1]

[After *May 31, 1936*][2]

I was taken to the huts of the workers in the Kolar Gold-fields the other day. I could not help remarking that the huts were not fit for human habitation. With the mining Company declaring fat dividends of 30 to 40 per cent it seemed to be cruel to me that those who earned the profits for them were housed in those dismal hovels. The huts you have built here are certainly better, they are well ventilated and well situated. But there ought to be something like a minimum standard of a hut for unmarried people and of a hut for married couples and couples with children. We ought to realize that husband and wife must not share the same room with grown-up children. These cabins provide for no privacy. I cannot understand municipalities measuring out land for their poor employees by so many feet. One more room for each of these huts and a verandah is an absolute necessity. I am glad you propose to provide the same facilities for the Harijan employees, but pray bear this suggestion in mind when you build houses for them. There are, I am pained to say, still numerous municipalities which provide no housing facilities for their lowest paid employees. I do not know when we shall realize our duty to the most essential of our servants. If we do not do so ere long, the doom will soon settle on our society, as it must, if the society does not correct itself.

Harijan, 11-7-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" The colony, consisted of 250 huts, built by the Municipality for its employees

[2] From the reference to Kolar Gold-fields in the speech it is evident that this visit took place after May 31, 1936. *Vide* Vol LXII.

2. *TELEGRAM TO THE SECRETARY, HINDU SABHA, DELHI*[1]

June 1, 1936

HINDU SABHA
CARE KALIA, DELHI

THANKS. IGNORE SUCH ABERRATIONS EXCEPT FOR PURGING RELIGION OF ALL IMPURITIES.

GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

3. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

BANGALORE CITY,
June 1, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your letter of 30th is before me. I am glad you are making steady progress. If you will always keep some strength in reserve, you will be proof against malaria.

Yes, we had a strenuous time yesterday. I was none the worse for it. Sardar picked a bad cold on the way and he won't give it up even today. The boys and the girls remained behind to see the gold mines. They return today. The right hand has been giving excellent work. I am therefore giving it rest.

The Gujarati papers are full of Harilal's exploits.[2]

If you will be in local Simla,[3] there will have to be a local line to it too. And there will have to be variations in the two temperatures to attract me!

Love.

BAPU

From the original C.W. 6344. Courtesy. Mirabehn. Also G N. 9810

[1] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram saying: "Hindus shocked over Harilal's conversion. Please guide how we can reclaim misguided brother."

[2] He had embraced Islam and changed his name to Abdulla.

[3] The reference is to the addressee's cottage which was going to be built at Varoda, "an apology for a hill", as Gandhiji had described it in a previous letter; *vide* Vol. LXII, p 461

4. *LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA*

June 1, 1936

DEAR SATIS BABU,

You give me a satisfactory account of your health. Not so Pyarelal. He says your heart is not sound and that you are constantly overstraining yourself I wish you would recognize that such treatment of the body is a positive sin.

Are you dealing with the same famine that Profulla is dealing with? Or is this some other?

I see several difficulties about leaving something permanent after every exhibition. We never get a site where we can build anything solid. Then there must be that [local][1] desire which would pay for the thing and ensure its upkeep. We are having the next Congress in a *bona-fide* village. What would you suggest? How cheaply can we organize it? You know that the Lucknow [show][2] did after all become self-supporting.

We leave Bangalore City probably on 12th instant.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1630

5. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

June 1, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

We descended yesterday and work began. We toured the gold area the whole day, collected over Rs. 1,000 for Harijan cause and returned after 10 p.m. not much tired.

It is warm in Bangalore compared to Nandi Hill. And nothing pleases after the bracing air and isolation of Nandi Hill which for me has a charm which no other hill possesses. It was not without a sigh I left Nandi. Sardar is almost disconsolate. He won't even go out for a walk. I had my usual hour. But

[1] & [2] Not clear in the source

Bangalore itself is undoubtedly pleasant at this time of the year. Only Nandi has spoiled us.

I am glad you are again able to spin.

Yes, your envelope is good. But you must not pay through the nose for them. It must be an idle hour's job for someone who is in the household or given to those who would be thankful to earn an honest anna.

Why should you feel helpless? Why not be wholly satisfied with what you can get through during the day? You may be angry with yourself when you neglect anything. But what can you do when time runs against you?

You must have seen Harilal having adopted Islam! He must have sensation and he must have money. He has both. I am thinking of addressing a general letter to Mussalman friends.[1] I will see how it shapes itself. Poor Ba and poorer Kanti[2]. Both were much upset.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

You are right about our unbusiness-like habits Go for those who betray them.

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANOR VILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original. C.W 3729. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur Also G.N. 6885

6. *LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH*

June 1, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I hope you have all returned, and in much better health. How did Manibehn[3] fare at the place? Is she now quite well? Did Vanamala[4] and Mohan[5] gain in health? You used to take long walks, didn't you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S.N. 9094

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", pp. 5-7.
[2] Harilal's son
[3], [4], & [5] Addressee's wife, daughter and son

7. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 1, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

Last night, on reaching Bangalore, I got your letter of May 12. By now you must be in Khurja. I hope you are keeping fit. I shall certainly reach Wardha on the 15th; you can come over then. In the mean while write to me at Bangalore City.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi: *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 251

8. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS[1]

BANGALORE,
June 2, 1936

The newspapers report that about a fortnight ago my eldest son Harilal, now nearing fifty years, accepted Islam and that on Friday last 29th May in the midst of a large congregation in the Jumma Musjid at Bombay, he was permitted to announce his acceptance amid great acclamation and that, after his speech was finished, he was besieged by his admirers who vied with one another to shake hands with him. If his acceptance was from the heart and free from any worldly considerations, I should have no quarrel. For I believe Islam to be as true a religion as my own.

But I have the gravest doubt about this acceptance being from the heart or free from selfish considerations Everyone who knows my son Harilal, knows that he has been for years addicted to the drink evil and has been in the habit of visiting houses of ill-fame. For some years he has been living on the charity of friends who have helped him unstintingly. He is indebted to

[1] The Statement, published in *Harijan* under the title "To My Numerous Muslim Friends", was issued to the Press on June 2, 1936.

some Pathans from whom he had borrowed on heavy interest. Up to only recently he was in dread of his life from his Pathan creditors in Bombay. Now he is the hero of the hour in that city. He had a most devoted wife who always forgave his many sins including his unfaithfulness. He has three grown-up children, two daughters and one son, whom he ceased to support long ago.

Not many weeks ago he wrote to the Press complaining against Hindus—not Hinduism—and threatening to go over to Christianity or Islam The language of the letter showed quite clearly that he would go over to the highest bidder. That letter had the desired effect Through the good offices of a Hindu councillor he got a job in Nagpur Municipality. And he came out with another letter[1] to the Press recalling the first and declaring emphatic adherence to his ancestral faith.

But, as events have proved, his pecuniary ambition was not satisfied and in order to satisfy that ambition, he has embraced Islam There are other facts which are known to me and which strengthen my inference.

When I was in Nagpur in April last, he had come to see me and his mother and he told me how he was amused by the attentions that were being paid to him by the missionaries of rival faiths. God can work wonders. He has been known to have changed the stoniest hearts and turned sinners into saints, as it were, in a moment. Nothing will please me better than to find that during the Nagpur meeting and the Friday announcement he had repented of the past and had suddenly become a changed man having shed the drink habit and sexual lust.

But the Press reports give no such evidence. He still delights in sensation and in good living. If he had changed, he would have written to me to gladden my heart. All my children have had the greatest freedom of thought and action. They have been taught to regard all religions with the same respect that they paid to their own. Harilal knew that if he had told me that he had found the key to a right life and peace in Islam, I would have put no obstacle in his path. But no one of us, including his son now twenty-four years old and who is with me, knew anything about the event till we saw the announcement in the Press.

My views on Islam are well known to the Mussalmans who are reported to have enthused over my son's profession. A brotherhood of Islam has telegraphed to me thus:

[1] For Gandhiji's comment on it, *vide* Vol. LXII, p. 221.

Expect like your son you truth-seeker to embrace Islam truest religion of world.

I must confess that all this has hurt me. I sense no religious spirit behind this demonstration. I feel that those who are responsible for Harilal's acceptance of Islam did not take the most ordinary precautions they ought to have in a case of this kind.

Harilal's apostasy is no loss to Hinduism and his admission to Islam is a source of weakness to it if, as I apprehend, he remains the same wreck that he was before.

Surely conversion is a matter between man and his Maker who alone knows His creatures' hearts. And conversion without a clean heart is, in my opinion, a denial of God and religion. Conversion without cleanness of heart can only be a matter for sorrow, not joy, to a godly person.

My object in addressing these lines to my numerous Muslim friends is to ask them to examine Harilal in the light of his immediate past and, if they find that his conversion is a soulless matter, to tell him so plainly and disown him and if they discover sincerity in him to see that he is protected against temptations so that his sincerity results in his becoming a godfearing member of society. Let them know that excessive indulgence has softened his brain and undermined his sense of right and wrong, truth and falsehood. I do not mind whether he is known as Abdulla or Harilal if, by adopting one name for the other, he becomes a true devotee of God which both the names mean

Harijan, 6-6-1936

9. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

June 2, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I have your letter.

I shall be satisfied if you can get proper rest at Juhu; take exercise and observe the food restrictions. You certainly need the belt for your abdomen though you may also consult a doctor if you like.

We shall reach Wardha on the 15th. Madalasa[1] has scribbled a couple of lines perfunctorily. I would not mind her not

[1] Addressee's daughter

writing if by going there she has gained weight and thrown her mental worries into the sea.

Where is Om[1] ? I of course have Shriman's Hindi work[2]. I shall write something and send it. You must have read about Harilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N. 2982

10. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

June 2, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

The enclosed letter[3] is for your information I have written to him that he should place his suggestion before you and before Bapa if the latter happens to go to Bharuch.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS]

We shall be here till the 13th.

This letter certainly does not mean that you are to accommodate him. I do not even know him. This responsibility is yours entirely. The reply to Jagjivandas amounts only to this.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 4039

[1] Addressee's daughter

[2] A collection of Hindi poems, *Rotika Raga*; *vide* "Letter to Shriman Narayan Agrawal", 13-7-1936

[3] This is not traceable.

11. LETTER TO ABUL KALAM AZAD

[After *June 2, 1936*][1]

DEAR MAULANA SAHEB,

If you have seen the enclosed I would like your considered opinion on the points raised therein. Is such conversion valid in Islam? Is the method adopted lawful? Is the way the thing is being advertised lawful or permissible? Will you publish your opinion or permit me to publish it?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

12. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 4, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I congratulate you on not being nominated[2]. If some of the things you have drop out of themselves, it would be a gain.

As to the Y M. C. A , I would not hazard an opinion without having fuller knowledge.

I have myself chosen the ivory things for you today. They will be sent to you by the depot with invoice. If the things are ill-chosen or not to your taste, you must blame yourself for having commissioned for the choice an ignoramus. You will give me your opinion without reserve. Proper address has been given

The weather in Bangalore, too, is cool enough.

I have addressed a fairly long letter to Muslim friends. I observe that the papers over here have been afraid to publish the full text. You shall have it if it is not published anywhere.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original. C W. 3576 Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G N 6385

[1] *Vide* "Statement to the Press", pp 5-7
[2] To the Jullundur Municipality

13. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Yours of Ist has just arrived. "Empty bottles" are more needed in Segaon than perhaps in Maganwadi. But I am not less in Maganwadi for being in Segaon than when I was there without Segaon. But no extra exertion should be put forth to secure them. Whatever you have to spare should come my way when you are coming. The razors are not used for knives. They are used for shaving. You shall see the specimen knives when you come. Yes, you will occupy a corner wherever I am both on your way to Waltair and return.

Self-praise is no praise. And when one always insists that she can never be coerced the hearer will take it with a grain or two of salt. *A la* J. you belong to a system that is based on coercion. Therefore the less you talk of not being coerced the better!!

The return of the *khes* to you is a double-distilled stupidity. Did you get the lace too? Poor Jerajani sent me a copy of the letter he sent to his people saying that the *khes* was to come to me and the lace to you. This is an idiotic circle. Are you responsible for the infection? Anyway do write a strong letter of protest to the sender. And do not spend money on sending it. You should bring it. You *must obey*.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original. C W. 3577 Courtesy: Amrit Kaur Also G N. 6386

14. LETTER TO MIRZA ISMAIL

BANGALORE,
June 5, 1936

DEAR SIR MIRZA,

Many thanks for your letter. It emboldens me to ask you, please put the following before His Highness.

I understand Harijans are not allowed even to attend the Durbars whenever they are held. I can find no warrant in Hindu religion for the bar. Unless there are valid and insuperable objections to the relief being granted, I do hope that the prohibition will be removed.

I would urge the necessity of opening all State temples to Harijans on the same terms as the *savarna* Hindus.

I am hoping we shall meet before we leave Bangalore which we expect to do the 12th inst.

With renewed thanks for the hospitality and attention we are receiving.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

15. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 5, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I was silent over your letter because I wanted to have a talk with Kanu, which I had at length yesterday. He does not wish to be away for the present at any rate. He particularly wishes to acquire from me whatever he can just by remaining by my side although he no doubt wants to learn a good deal of music from Panditji[1]. Hence, I have assured him that he may rely without fear on my promise that I would gladly let him go any time he thinks he has had enough of me or wants to go to Panditji or anywhere else and obtain some special knowledge. I think this is enough for the present. Of course I shall be watching him.

[1] Narayan Moreshwar Khare

He has a clean mind, but after all he is only an adolescent. Sometimes he suffers from melancholy but it is momentary and there is no particular reason for it. Didn't we all at his age have a similar experience more or less?

As for the school, I am getting convinced more and more that we should start thinking in terms of closing it unless it becomes self-supporting. For, if it does not stand on its own it could be looked upon as being run to serve our needs We however believe that knowledge should be imparted only to the seeker. Yes, of course we would go begging money for such students if we have any as might thirst for knowledge and yet be unable to pay their way. If we had such seekers, they would cheerfully carry out our word and within a year fully bear their financial burden. There are many institutions of the kind in America where immediately on admission the student begins to earn his board side by side with his studies. You may continue this discussion in your letter if you wish.

Kanu has gone through this letter and says that I am not correct in saying that he has a great desire to learn music under Panditji. If he is ordered to go to Ahmedabad, he would rather learn it at the Gandharva Vidyalaya under Shankarrao[1] Vyas although it cannot be said that this is what he wishes. According to his present state of mind, his only wish is to be with me and do what I ask him to. He will be under my care and there is no reason to worry on his account. He has written a long letter to you.

I have written to the Press on the subject of Harilal, though nothing has been published yet. I do not say anything here, hoping it will be in print in due course.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The progress made there in spinning is excellent in my view. As for Sardar, I will speak to him. He should, however, make it a point to come if he can have an opportunity.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./III. Also C.W. 8492. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] 'Shankarlal' in the source, which is obviously a slip.

16. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

June 5, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. I was pained to read about Bachubhai[1]. You cannot leave him as long as he is bed-ridden. Tell Jugatram[2] to consult a homoeopath. Homoeopathy has not won my faith, but it helped Devdas and a medical specialist[3] whom we met here is all praise for it. In any case it will do no harm, and may do some good.

I am returning Kusum's letter. I should like it very much if she went to Bochasan. If Lilavati feels inclined to go, I would certainly encourage her to do so. I will have a talk with her when I return to Wardha on the 14th. Amtul Salaam is not at Wardha. She is still in Delhi and is not too eager to leave it. If she joins, she can of course give you much help and the work will benefit her, too Write to her at Delhi, she reads Gujarati. Her address is. Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi.

Do come and see me when I visit Gujarat. I will find some time for you.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6· G S. Gangabehnne, pp 90-1. Also C.W. 8831. Courtesy: Gangabehn Vaidya

[1] Addressee's nephew

[2] An Ayurvedic physician of Bombay

[3] Captain C. Oommen, the Medical Expert of the Grace Medical Mission

17. *LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA*

June 5, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

You must have received the letter I sent. I got your telegram here. You must have passed through Wardha at that time.

Amtul Salaam is in Delhi ailing. You should go there and try your newly acquired knowledge and then come over to Wardha when you can.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

We reach Wardha on the 14th.

From a facsimile of the Hindi. *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh,* facing p 252

18. *LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM*

June 5, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter.

Shall I ever prevail with you? Why should you not come to me if you are in bad health? Why should you stick on there in spite of your bad health? I have of course written to Sharma who has now reached Khurja.[1]

I follow your point about the food there. For the present, however, I cannot think of any suggestion. I shall be much pained if you do not eat what you should.

Ask the resident boys to write to me once so that I can start writing to them. It would be helpful if I knew their names, their standard of knowledge, etc.

Where is Sukirti gone?

We shall be reaching Wardha on the 14th.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N 617

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

19. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 5, 1936

BHAI RAJENDRA PRASAD,

Pass on the enclosed letter to Pierre Ceresole[1]. I saw your letter. You must have received a copy of Jawaharlal's letter. This time we shall have to further clarify many things.

I hope you are keeping well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W 9875. Courtesy. Rajendra Prasad

20. THE LEPROSY PROBLEM

Wardha is a Tahsil having a fair share of lepers. Village workers often come in contact with them. What are the workers to do? May they freely mix with the lepers? How may they help these unfortunate people? Is there any cure? These are daily questions for serious village workers. I, therefore, approached Rev Donald Miller, whom I have had the pleasure of knowing for years as a great worker among lepers in the Purulia Leper Asylum and otherwise, for simple directions for village workers. He readily agreed and a series of letters to an imaginary village worker was the result. The first letter is given below.[2]

Harijan, 6-6-1936

21. A FALSE ALARM

When I saw a newspaper report purporting to be a summary of what Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had said on khadi during his recent visit to the Khadi Bhandar at Bombay, I refused to believe it. It seemed to me to be so thoroughly contrary to what I had understood to be his considered view about khadi. I, therefore,

[1] A Swiss pacifist, President of the International Voluntary Service, who had come to India for helping in the relief work in Bihar

[2] Not reproduced here This and the other four articles of the series first appeared in *Harijan* and later in the form of a booklet, *The Leprosy Problem.*

sent the cutting to the Pandit,[1] and the following is the reply he promptly sent me.

> I attended and spoke at several dozen meetings in Bombay—I have lost count of them—and had no time to see reports I spoke in Hindustani of course, and reporting was no easy matter—and then condensed reports are apt to be misleading The report of what I said on khadi, however, was pointed out to me and was corrected the same day or the next day What I had said was that for many reasons—economic, political, social—khadi was an important item in our present programme and must be encouraged, but that I did not think that it could finally solve our poverty problem, especially if the present social system continued. This system transferred the improvements and additional earnings of the peasant to the landlord But I pointed out that this theoretical argument did not apply today For this I said that although I was in favour of big industry, I believed that even with the increase of industrialization there would be considerable room for the development of cottage industries in India At present, of course, they were even more important from various points of view.

This position may not satisfy the 'whole-hoggers'. But it is vastly different from the misleading report. Such misreporting is the lot of public men, especially in India, where they have to speak in an Indian language which reporters do not always understand and which has invariably to be translated into English for the purpose of transmission by wire. The moral is, the public should wait for authentic information before believing the so-called pronouncements of leaders in important matters.

From the letters I have received I see that the report created great uneasiness among some khadi workers. To them I should like to give a warning. It is fortunate that, for all practical purposes, what Pandit Jawaharlal actually says is satisfactory. He is too noble to say anything to please anybody if he does not believe in it. The quotation from his letter, therefore, derives added weight from the fact that the helmsman of the Congress holds views favourable to khadi. But khadi workers should know that there are many important public men outside the Congress who decry khadi and would never touch it. They should know too that even in the Congress ranks there are some who do not believe in khadi, who are never tired of ridiculing it, and use it merely as a measure of discipline till they succeed in banishing it from the Congress programme. Khadi has progressed in spite of these obstacles. No doubt it would have made greater

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXII, "Letter to Jawaharlal Nehru", pp. 424-5.

progress if we had not such opposition to contend against. It is a matter of very great consolation that Pandit Jawaharlal believes in khadi as he does. But what should khadi workers do if he, on further study, finds it necessary to declare himself against it? I hope that after sixteen years of experience of khadi and its possibilities, we have a sufficient number of confirmed believers whose faith in it is based on their own knowledge of its working. If it is still a derived faith, the prophecy of a great journalist will undoubtedly come true that on my death khadi will also die and that the wheels that would be broken after the natural event would be sufficient for full cremation of the body.

This nervousness over the false alarm is a portent if it is a token of weak faith of khadi workers. I suggest to them that they examine their own position and if they have doubts about the great economic importance of khadi, let them revise their attitude In order to help them to carry on the examination, I propose, if at all possible, in the next issue,[1] to put my view of the importance of khadi for India from several points of view.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

22. *INDIA IN A VILLAGE*

I tender my congratulations to the Maharashtra Provincial Congress Committee on their decision to hold the next Congress session at Khirdi, a village near Faizpur—another village in East Khandesh. If the plans are properly laid and preparations undertaken in advance, the Reception Committee will be able to put up a brave show at a comparatively less cost than is usually incurred at these annual national gatherings. The conditions are obvious. The Committee must not aim at reproducing a city in the village. That would be doing violence to the whole conception. They should aim at giving the city people who, let us hope, will gather in their thousands, such hospitality as a model village should be able to supply. In other words, we should see in December a miniature edition of village India in Khirdi. By wise planning the organizers will find that there is practically nothing that a model village cannot supply in the way of hygienic comforts, proper food, proper sanitation, and in case of sickness proper medical aid. These are not to be had today in the generality of villages. Therefore, I have used the expression 'model

[1] *Vide* "Is Khadi Economically Sound?", 20-6-1936.

village'. A model village should lack nothing that is required for healthy living. But everything in a village has to conform to the village scale which need never be shoddy and [has to] be, at the same time, subdued. For lighting, I would suggest electric light, though it may be a long time before our villages are able to have electricity. The whole show should be an object lesson both for villagers and townsfolk. The chief attraction of the Congress will necessarily be the exhibition. The Lucknow Exhibition was undoubtedly a success when one realizes that it was the first effort of its kind. The coming exhibition should be a much greater success and yet, so far as I can see, need not cost as much as the Lucknow Exhibition did. In order that it may become a success, artists, engineers and like professional men will have to volunteer their services free of charge on a larger scale than heretofore. And they will have to approach what to me is a sacred task with the village mentality.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

23. FOR UNCERTIFIED KHADI DEALERS

Unfortunately it has been found that owing to the increased scale of wages that are being offered to hand-spinners on behalf of the A. I. S. A. and a consequent slight rise in the price of a certain style of khadi, several uncertified dealers are selling khadi as if it was certified by the A. I. S. A. and some of them do not even hesitate to defend their unpatriotic and unhumanitarian action on the ground that the A. I. S. A. is not a registered body.[1] In order to ascertain the true legal position instead of relying on his own ancient knowledge of law, Shri Rajagopalachari referred to an eminent lawyer for opinion and this is his decisive opinion:

> I have no doubt that the Tirupur merchant has been wrongly advised as to the law. The law protects unregistered bodies as much as registered bodies in this respect. To use an unregistered name pretending to be somebody that he is not is as much a deceit of the public as it would be if the name had been registered. Registration under a statute may have statutory consequences and protections; but in the protection of the public from deceit there is no distinction between registered and unregistered names It is absurd *prima facie* that because a name is not registered, he can assume the same name and pass off goods as certified by A I. S. A An action will lie for injunction and damages.

[1] *Vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 320-1.

Injunction you will have Damages will depend on proof that persons purchased believing the stuff had been made or certified by the A I S. A.

If formal opinion with authorities is required I shall get it drawn for you at an early date.

(Sd) T. R. V. SASTRI

Ooty, 23rd *May, '36*

The eminent lawyer is no other than the ex-Advocate-General of Madras, Shri T. R. Venkatarama Sastriar. I hope that in view of this opinion those dealers who are carrying on unauthorized sales of khadi as if they were authorized by the A. I. S A. will desist from the practice which has been described as fraudulent. If it becomes necessary, opposed though I am to resort to law-courts, I would not hesitate in the interest of poor dumb spinners to advise legal steps being taken against those who knowingly injure their poor sisters.

Harijan, 6-6-1936

24. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June [*6*][1], *1936*

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have your letter. Serve Mirabehn as much as you can. It would have been better if you had been to see Premabehn. Do not undertake anything beyond your capacity. Do not talk too much. Do nothing but bury yourself in work. Do not talk unless it is necessary. I expect you have brought to Segaon only the necessary things.

I hope you are in good health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 9343. Also C W. 6618. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] Illegible in the source. This letter appears to be the one mentioned in the letter to Mirabehn dated June 6, 1936, the following item.

25. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

June 6, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your three letters received by the same post.

Devkapas[1] seed can be had from Bengal and other places. I am writing to Satis Babu.

I do not like the idea of bring[ing] the commode and pot or the desk from Wardha. For commode there should [be] a stool with the middle open and a half tin or a bucket or some such thing. For pot we may use a bottle or keep a village metal pot. For desk something quite cheap and serviceable made in Segaon. There need be no hurry about these things. If you have not quite understood what I want, you may wait till I return. Wooden bedstead may be brought, *lota* also. Stool should be rigged up there. Another cow will be necessary. Consult Chhotelal about it.

Did I tell you the date of departure is not 13 but 12. We reach therefore on 14th, Sunday, D. V.

You may expect Lilavati by the time this reaches you. The accompanying is for her.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W 6345. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9811

26. *LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL*

BANGALORE CITY,
June 6, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,[2]

Your letter.

I am glad Padma is proving so good and satisfactory. You must not judge sons from what you can say of Kichi[3]. Poor boy!

[1] A variety of cotton

[2] Daughter of S. Srinivasa Iyenagar This is written in Hindi.

[3] Addressee's son

His has been an unfortunate development. Let us hope Padma's goodness well infect Kichi and make him also good.

I am glad you went to Esther. If you found her glad to receive your visit, I would like you to go to her as often as you conveniently can.

I was sorry to hear about Father's continued illness. How nice it would be if he would take nature cure. Mention this to him on my behalf. He ought to pull through and get perfectly well through proper dieting and water and sun treatment.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bangalore City till 12th.

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

27. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 6, 1936

CHI. PRABHAVATI,

I have your letter of the 29th. You must have got my letter repeating the reply I gave earlier. You did well in returning to milk. Take 4 lb. and see. Do you get any fruit there, and do you find time for walks? You seem to have been deeply immersed in serving the family. Never give up your fixed course of prayers, etc. Teach spinning [to the people there]. There are likely to be many singers of the *Ramayana* there. Learn from them the tune in which to recite the *Ramayana*. You can find the time once you have a settled programme. For you have already learnt how to utilize even a short interval of five minutes. You must be getting *Harijanbandhu* if not anything else. Write regularly to Jayaprakash whether you hear from him or not.

You should find a carding-bow.

Write to Mathuradas[1] at Madhubani, P. O. Champaran, so that he may send you what you need.

You should never lose your inner peace in spite of the many outer worries.

[1] Mathuradas Asar, a khadi expert of Sabarmati Ashram who had gone to work in Bihar

I write nothing about Harilal here as I have said much through the Press. Write to Amtul Salaam at Delhi; her address: Harijan Nivas, Kingsway, Delhi

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

At Bangalore City till the 12th and at Wardha on the 14th.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3472

28. *LETTER TO MIRABEHN*

[After *June 6, 1936*][1]

CHI. MIRA,

Yours of 3rd just to hand. Yes, Sejila should have a shed by himself, so as to leave your verandah free. On second thoughts I think it will be wise to bring the commode and the pot from Maganwadi for European visitors. Therefore this is in addition to the plan suggested by me.

If you get hold of peacocks, I do not mind. But I know nothing of their habits.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6346. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9812

29. *LETTER TO KHWAJA ABDUL MAJID*

AS AT WARDHA,
June 7, 1936

Wonderful! I was about to write to you today about another matter when I got your welcome letter. To hear from you is like meeting a long lost friend or brother whichever you will; have both.

In my diconsolateness over Ansari's death I thought of you, Shuaib and Zakir Husain. I decided to write a long letter to Z.[2] I am daily awaiting his reply.

[1] From the contents it is evident that this was written after the letter to the addressee dated June 6, 1936; *vide* p. 20.
[2] *Vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 441-2.

Asaf Ali wrote to me about some memorial. I told him this was not an opportune time politically for a national memorial to so big a man. I gave the same opinion over Motilalji's death. I have in mind not the financial stringency but the political condition. If people spontaneously send money and if we get a large enough sum, we might make some use as a memorial by personal admirers and obligers (cannot find the right word just now). I hold on to the cheque[1] till I hear from you or till we meet.

Your exposition of politics is deeply interesting. "*Et tu, Brute!*" Do not take this literally in its application. How have the mighty fallen? Do you remember your remark at the Ansari Hotel? But I do not blame you. I have nothing but praise for your downright honesty. Yes, we must meet. Do come to Wardha any day after 16th June. You know that at the end of the month the whole Working Committee will be there. But I know you want to discuss the thing first with me. Only therefore the earlier you come the better.

Now for what I was to write about. If you have not seen my public letter about my eldest son's so-called conversion, I enclose a cutting herewith. Read it and let me know your views. Is such a conversion permissible and right? Is all this advertisement the poor wreck and rake is receiving a proper thing? I have no anger against Harilal. He is hardly responsible for his acts. During the past three months he has gone through many changes. You must know that it is not loafers who are responsible for what has happened and is happening. Those who are accepted as responsible Muslims in society are doing all this. Do study this phenomenon, interest yourself in it for the sake of religion and this unhappy land. If you put a different construction on the event, you will not hesitate to tell me so frankly.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] The addressee had sent a cheque for Rs. 1,000 for a memorial to Ansari

30. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 7, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Do not be alarmed at the reduced prices of the articles sent to you. I asked for it because you were to sell them as swadeshi propaganda and might have to lose on them, too, if you are unable to dispose of them. Let not your princely pride be wounded. You should charge the full selling price plus postage, etc. No idiocy allowed in business matters. For these things you are no *rajkumari* but a simple *sevika* and trustee. I have a copy of the letter and bill sent to you.

Hope you are quite restored.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3578. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6387

31. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 7, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I return the letter from Hardwar and retain the other papers sent by you.

Sumitra had left for Nagpur when your letter and mine were received at the Gurukul. I now send them all to you. If Gopal is there, he might know her address.

As to Tara's[1] other papers and things, they should be left untouched till we know what can be done with the will.[2] We have first to trace her relatives who may be interested in her property. The bicycle can certainly be used by Gopal. Similarly you may use the *sita*[*r*].

I fear Dr. Nur Jahan has to be asked to keep her English

[1] Mary Chesley, who died of pneumonia in May 1936, on her way to Badri-Kedar; *vide* Vol LXII, pp 433-4.

[2] *Vide* Vol LXII, pp 436-7.

things with her for the time being. We reach Wardha [on 14th][1].

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6062 Also C.W. 3392 Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

32. LETTER TO GOVIND V. GURJALE

June 7, 1936

MY DEAR GOVINDRAO,

You have given me interesting bits about your activities. May they prosper. Never depart from the golden rule of cutting your cloak according to your cloth. No debts to be incurred.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Bangalore City till 12th.

From a photostat: G.N. 1400

33. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 7, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. I am sorry to learn about the sudden death of Prakashmani. Please convey my condolences to his relatives there if any.

Where has Sukirti gone?

Nothing can be better if looking after the children brings you back to health. How does Rukmini behave now? Do you visit Dr. Ansari's?

Ask Sharma to come there, I have written[2] to him.

Paparamma[3] and Saraswati[4] are arriving here tomorrow morning. There is no question of Kanti going to Harilal now. He has calmed down. You must have read what I have written about Harilal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 616

[1] Illegible in the source

[2] *Vide* p. 14.

[3]&[4] G. Ramachandran's sister and her daughter

34. LETTER TO JANKIE AMMAL NAIDOO

[AS AT] WARDHA,
June 8, 1936

MY DEAR JANKIE,

I was delighted to have your letter. It is good Father is coming to India. I wish you too had come Of course after the rich living of Natal, you may not appreciate the simple life here. And you will be horrified to see the appalling poverty of the villages. That experience would chasten you. However, Father will tell you on his return what India is like.

Yes, all the Phœnixites are well.

Love.

BAPU[1]

[PS.]

Address: M. K. Gandhi
Wardha
India

SHRI JANKIE AMMAL NAIDOO
37 MALLINSON RD., SYDENHAM
DURBAN, NATAL

From a photostat: G N 10463

35. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 8, 1936

CHI. MARY,

I am in no hurry. Do finish your slivers and other urgent work before tackling Tara's box. I wrote[2] yesterday or the day before returning your letter to Sumitrabehn.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6063. Also C.W. 3393. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

[1] This is in the Tamil script.
[2] *Vide* pp 24-5

36. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

BANGALORE,
June 8, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I have the letters from you both. You must have read of Harilal's exploit. I am not sending you a separate copy of my article as it has appeared in several newspapers. Nor have I anything to add as I have said enough in my article. Ba has been unhappy but bears it very patiently. Kanti is calm. I should have no worry or objection if he reforms himself now.

We shall reach Wardha on the 14th. Tari is still not cured of her ailment, but she is bound to get well if she follows my treatment with patience. All the youngsters here, both boys and girls, are at present busy sight-seeing in this State.

Lakshmi has been keeping indifferent health. She fell ill at Bombay just when Devdas was about to leave for this place.

Ramdas is doing his agency business satisfactorily.

I have not the least grudge against Sushila's going to live in the city. One has to practise self-denial for the children's sake. Without this the latter cannot advance in life. It is just proper that both [the children] are with you. I shall be satisfied if you do not Anglicize them, but bring them up under the influence of dharma. Do not let them forget their mother tongue and also teach them Hindi. I should like them to learn Tamil since you are living there. None of your acts should encourage in them an infatuation for English. They will acquire a working knowledge of the language. However, if one acquires knowledge through one's mother tongue, one can better understand, digest and utilize it in one's life. But then this is what I think is wise. It is for you to adopt the course that you both find agreeable. There is no question of doing anything merely to please me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4852

37. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

BANGALORE,
June 9, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your exploit in going with drawing-room slippers and missing your way and walking till you were exhausted was worthy of an idiot. You have more than earned the title!

This letter will probably be the last from Bangalore. We leave here on 12th, reaching Wardha 14th.

Yes, Mira is quite well working as hard as she can at my hut. *Vidya hi seva*[1] is quite good. But it is better to have *Seva hi Vidya*[2]. Why not *Vidya Sevayai*, meaning Knowledge for Service? I suppose you will have it somewhat like this:



This as artistically drawn as is possible to do. But you know what I mean.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original· C.W. 3730. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur Also G.N 6886

[1] "Knowledge itself is service"; the motto was needed for the crest of the Lady Irwin College in Delhi.

[2] "Service itself is knowledge."

38. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 9, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This will be perhaps my last letter from here. We hope to be in Wardha on 14th inst.

Cartmen seem to be having a fine time there. 50 carts working at a single job simultaneously must be a record for Segaon. I hope they were all local. I expect to see you hale and hearty.

Evidently Balwantsinha and Munnalal were a godsend for you. When I felt like accepting Munnalal's offer and suggested to Balwantsinha to seek your unbroken contact, सत्संग, I had no notion you would find them almost indispensable. Anyway, their being with you during your illness and convalescence was a source of great comfort to me.

The Madras basket contained apples Did you have them? They were all from Janammal.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W 6347. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9813

39. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 9, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

You have, I believe, my letter[1] about Kanu. They have all been very busy sight-seeing. We hear from them from time to time. The other day they paid us a visit also. Here is another letter from Prema. You got the earlier too, I hope.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M U /II Also C W 8493 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1] *Vide* pp. 11-2.

40. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

June 9, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

We expect to reach there on the 14th morning. Attend to the enclosed letters. I hope you are in good health and Bhansali is practising his penance within limits. Of course I remember others, too, but don't write about them to save time.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 10716

41. TELEGRAM TO RAIHANA TYABJI[1]

BANGALORE,
June 10, 1936

ONE OF MY STAUNCHEST FRIENDS GONE.[2] MOTHER AND YOU WILL FIND ME EQUAL SHARER IN LOSS. FATHER WAS TRULY GRAND OLD MAN OF GUJARAT AND FAITHFUL SERVANT OF NATION WHO KNEW NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HINDU AND MUSLIM. SARDAR AND OTHERS ALL JOIN ME.

The Bombay Chronicle, 11-6-1936

[1] An almost identical telegram was sent to Mohammed Habib, son-in-law of Abbas Tyabji.

[2] Addressee's father Abbas Tyabji died on June 9, 1936.

42. *MESSAGE TO MANJULA M. MEHTA*

June 10, 1936

Return with greater purity, kindness, health and self-restraint. I have great expectations of you both. May you prove Doctor's[1] true heirs.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati C.W. 1602

43. *INTERVIEW TO ADI-KARNATAKA SANGH DEPUTATION*[2]

June 10, 1936

Mahatma Gandhi stated that he was in full agreement with the view that no work for the uplift of Harijans could be carried on satisfactorily unless it had their co-operation No one had emphasized more than he the fact that in the service that they had undertaken, to remove all social and other disabilities in the case of Harijans, they were only discharging a debt of obligation, as they had committed the sin which had doomed the persons to social and other hardships.[3]

He pointed out that the Kengeri Gurukul did not belong to the Harijan Sevak Sangh, and that far from the Kengeri Gurukul excluding Harijans, it expressly served Harijans and took in Harijans whenever they were forthcoming.

The next important thing was that the Conference was one of *savarna* Hindu workers who were going to assemble in order to compare notes, discuss their difficulties, find out their own weaknesses and to organize their

[1] Addressee's father-in-law, Dr. Pranjivan Mehta

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". P G. D'Souza, leader of the deputation, among other things pointed out that the Harijan Sevak Sangh took no account of work being done by Harijans who wanted H S S Funds to be made available to them, that if Hindu opposition persisted the Missionaries were bound to accentuate their antagonism, that the Harijans were not being admitted in the Gurukul Ashram at Kengeri, that the Harijan Workers' Conference about to be held was going to be a purely non-Harijan affair and that it was no use concentrating on temple-entry when Harijans' economic and social conditions badly needed improvement

[3] This paragraph is from *The Hindu*

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[3] This paragraph is from *The Hindu.*

work better. The Conference was one of hereditary sinners who wanted to find out ways and means of repaying the debt they owed to Harijans. How were the Harijans going to help in this Conference? They were certainly welcome to attend it, but how would they help in the deliberations?

D'SOUZA: You may call yourselves debtors but the Harijans cannot help suspecting a superiority complex in all that you do, and you will lend yourselves to the suspicion that instead of devising means to help them you are devising new means to keep them down.

GANDHIJI. If there is suspicion for which there is no ground, I do not mind the suspicion. The *savarnas*' action if it is honest will dispel it. I do not blame the Harijans because they have known nothing better.

A HARIJAN: There is no suspicion. We simply wanted to narrate our hardships.

GANDHIJI: Need you narrate them to me? Don't I know them? Don't I proclaim from the house-tops that you have to rise all along the line? No; I want you to understand that it is a conference of sincere sinners. You are all welcome of course, but you will find that the complexion of the meeting is different from what you expect it to be. We are all debtors; we know that we can pay nothing more than small instalments, and that our creditors may be so enraged as to fling those instalments in our faces and kick us out. But we have to tolerate even this if such is to be our lot. For our goal is to pay the principal with interest. When Dr. Ambedkar abuses us, I say that it serves us right. Then sometimes the creditor becomes so great that he does not care for the debt of the debtors. We, however, have to forget everything else and concentrate on repaying the debt. The Shastras say that when the cup of a people's iniquity is full, they perish. Hinduism is a dying cult if it will not purge itself of untouchability and will perish, Ambedkar or no Ambedkar. If our attempt is sincere, I assume you will see no superiority complex among the reformers. I admit that as I see Hinduism, darkness envelops many *savarnas*. They call irreligion religion. Now it is out of this darkness that a very imperfect class of sinners are trying to come out. As regards the condition of some Harijans, I am reminding the *savarnas* day in and day out that it is they the *savarnas* who are responsible for the filthy habits of some of the Harijans. I tell them it is wrong of them to insist on Harijans getting clean before they receive the same status as other Hindus. We have to admit them first and then make them

clean. As regards your disabilities, housing conditions, etc , I am pleading with the State. Pray be patient. We may not be able to deliver the goods as quickly as you want us to, but do not question our motives.

D'SOUZA: We thank you for having given us the assurance you have given We want you to extend to the Harijans the hand of fellowship A sinner should not behave as though in expressing penitence he was doing some service to God. I want you to get the Harijans direct representation in the Mysore Assembly in proportion to their population They should be recognized as having attained manhood.

GANDHIJI: For that I must make a suggestion to you. You must displace the present Maharajah and have me as such for a week!

Harijan, 27-6-1936, and *The Hindu*, 11-6-1936

44. SPEECH AT HARIJAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE, KENGERI[1]

June 10, 1936[2]

Whoever conceived the idea of this Conference gave vent to a happy idea and we should be able to make good use of this meeting. Though there are at this Conference representatives invited from all parts of South India, there are others here, too, and instead of confining myself only to the actual work of the delegates, I will make some general observations.

These general observations I shall make for the benefit of the *savarna* Hindus. Let them understand that this movement for the removal of untouchability is different from other current movements in India. So far as I am concerned, and so far as the Harijan Sevak Sangh is concerned, the anti-untouchability movement is not a political movement. Nor is it intended purely for the economic amelioration of the Harijans nor yet for their social regeneration. But this does not mean that we do not aim at the Harijans' social, economic or political advancement. We want all these improvements. If we are honest about our work, progress in these directions is bound to follow from our efforts.

[1] This was published in *Harijan* under the title "The Inwardness of Harijan Movement."

[2] From *The Hindu*

But our goal is quite different from the things I have mentioned just now. It is this: that untouchability is a blot upon Hinduism and must be removed at any cost. Untouchability is a poison which, if we do not get rid of it in time, will destroy Hinduism.

I know that those of you who are outside the ranks of workers and delegates—nay, even some of the workers and delegates—do not realize the real significance of what I am saying. But whether you realize the significance or not, I must continue to express the views which I hold and hold very strongly.

I can see in the continuance of untouchability slow destruction overtaking Hinduism now, and I promise that if you study the thing itself as I am doing, you will observe that the slow disintegration which Hinduism is going through, may become so rapid as to make it impossible for the workers to overcome it.

And why do I say that untouchability is a curse, a blot and a powerful poison that will destroy Hinduism? It is repugnant to our sense of humanity to consider a single human being as untouchable by birth. If you were to examine the scriptures of the world and the conduct of peoples other than Hindus, you would not find any parallel to the untouchability I have brought to your attention just now. I can well understand a person being untouchable whilst he is performing a task which he himself would feel makes him untouchable. For instance, a nurse, who is nursing a patient who is helpless and bleeding and soiling his clothes and suffering from a disease giving out from his body a foul smell, such a nurse whilst she is nursing such a patient is untouchable. But when she has washed herself, she becomes as touchable as ourselves. Not only that. She is not only just as fit to move in society as any of us, but she is also adorable for the profession which she follows. She is worthy of our respect and, so long as we have ranks in our society, she must occupy a very high place amongst us.

Now look at the other side of the picture. Take, for instance, Dr. Ambedkar. He is pronounced as belonging to the Depressed Classes and as being untouchable. Intellectually he is superior to thousands of intelligent and educated caste Hindus. His personal cleanliness is as high as that of any of us. Today he is an eminent lecturer in Law. Tomorrow you may find him a Judge of the High Court. In other words, there is no position in the Government of this country to which he may not aspire and rise, and to which an orthodox Brahmin can rise. But that orthodox Brahmin will be defiled by the touch of Dr.

Ambedkar and that because of his unpardonable sin that he was born a Mahar (untouchable)!

If we had not been habituated to think that untouchability by birth is an integral part of Hinduism, we would not conduct ourselves towards our fellow human beings as many of us conduct ourselves even today.

I know that I have told you nothing new in this my talk to you today. I know I have said this same thing in a much more burning language than I have done today. Yet what I say is not, and will not be, superfluous so long as this simple fact of the need for the removal of untouchability does not affect your understanding or conduct.

Untouchability is a phenomenon which is peculiar to Hinduism only and it has got no warrant either in reason or in the Shastras, and what little I have studied of the Shastras and what I have been told by people who have made a deeper study of them shows that there is no warrant for untouchability by birth in Hinduism. I have not the time now to go into the Shastric precepts. Nor is it necessary at this time of the day to give you Shastric proofs for my statement. But what is necessary is that if you are satisfied that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism and that there is a danger of its destroying Hinduism, you must set about removing it

What will you do to remove it? If all of you will say that you have done your duty by declaring that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism, it will be a mockery. It will not be enough even if you in a flush of enthusiasm go to a Harijan and touch him and embrace him, and then forget all about him. It will not do even if you go to the Harijan quarters every day and make it a point to touch a number of Harijans as a token of your conviction.

What is required of you is that you should regulate your day-to-day conduct in such a manner that you make it absolutely evident to the Harijans whom you come across that a better day has dawned for them all.

You will begin by taking the Harijans along with you to the temple if you are in the habit of going to a temple. But if you discover that you will not be allowed into the temple along with your Harijan companions, then if you have the living belief that I have that untouchability is wrong, you will shun that temple as you shun a scorpion or fire. You will then believe with me that such a temple is not inhabited by God. I will take by way of illustration the greatest temple known all

over the world, viz., Kashi Vishwanath in Banaras. The Lord who is supposed to reside there is known as the Lord of the Universe. And yet in the very name of that Vishwanath the *savarna* Hindus have today the impudence to say to the Harijans: 'You shall not come to this temple'!

I claim to be as good a Hindu as any orthodox Hindu. I have endeavoured to enforce all precepts of Hinduism in my own life to the best of my ability. I admit that my ability is small. But that does not affect my attitude to and love for Hinduism. Yet, in spite of all that love for Hinduism, with a due sense of my own responsibility I am here to tell you that so long as the doors of the Banaras temple are closed against a single Harijan, Kashi Vishwanath does not reside in that temple and I could not possibly approach that temple with a belief in its sanctity or in the faith that by worshipping there I should be purified of my sins. I can have no sense of piety in respect of such a temple. And what is true of Kashi Vishwanath is true of every other temple in India which bars its doors to Harijans. It applies of course to all such temples in South India, including the Guruvayur temple.

Thank God, the gates of the Guruvayur temple are closed to me. But even supposing the trustees of that temple, or whoever is in authority there, gave me permission to enter that temple, I could not possibly avail myself of it so long as members of the Harijan community are shut out. Unless every one of you here begins in the way I have pointed out, he has not removed untouchability from his heart.

It is absolutely of no consequence that a vast majority of Harijans are uninterested in our campaign. Only this morning Mr. D'Souza, leading a deputation of Harijans,[1] told me that the Harijans were not so interested in temple-entry as in their political and economic amelioration and perhaps a rise in their social status. Naturally, they cannot think otherwise. For we are responsible for deadening their sense of unity with us and their desire to worship in common with us in our temples.

Therefore I say that the God of Hinduism is really non-existent for them. It is true that the God of Hinduism is not different from the God in Islam or Christianity. Only the mode of worship is peculiar to each religion. If Harijans because of our own sins—our own unpardonable treatment of them—have been taught to consider that the temples visited by *savarnas* are

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.

not for them, you could not blame them for their indifference in this matter. Force of habit has made them indifferent. That Harijans in Travancore and other parts of India have still got the desire to enter the temples and claim the same rights as other Hindus, is a good thing and a comforting thing, but it does not affect my argument.

There is another aspect of the opening of temples to Harijans which you must not fail to realize. If you open your temples to Harijans because they demand that they shall be so opened, you will not be doing any great thing. But if you open the temples to them because of a sense of sin for which you should atone, it becomes a religious act. I should insist on Hindu temples being thrown open to Harijans even if the Harijans in India were converted to another religion and there was only one Harijan left in the Hindu fold. It is this religious attitude that isolates the Harijan question from all other questions, and gives it a special importance. If our present programme was merely one of policy or political expediency, it would not have the religious significance that it has for me. If it was demonstrated to me to my satisfaction that the political or economic regeneration of Harijans would be enough to retain the Harijans in the Hindu fold, I should still want to open the temples and remove every trace of inequality. Because for me it is, as it must be for you, a question of repentance and reparation for the wrong we have done to our fellowmen.

Thus the threat of the conversion of Harijans to other religions which is agitating so many Hindus today, has no bearing on our duty to Harijans If we begin to quicken our activities, because of the threat of conversion, then such opening will lose the significance which I have outlined. I promise you that Hinduism will not be saved by such means.

Hinduism can only be saved when it has become purified by the performance of our duty without the expectation of any return whatsoever from the Harijans. Nothing less than that can possibly save Hinduism. If you do something by Harijans as a matter of expediency or political manœuvre, you have not rid yourselves of untouchability in your hearts. There will come many occasions when that poison will erupt on the Hindu social organism to such an extent that we shall be confounded. If we are ashamed of untouchability, we must shed it, no matter what results follow or may not follow.

I become impatient when *savarna* Hindus tell me from their platform of high superiority that they will remove un-

touchability when Harijans give up their habits of drinking, eating carrion, uncleanliness, etc. Suppose my father, mother, son or daughter were lepers, can I say that I will touch him or her only when he or she had got rid of leprosy? I will be false to our sacred tie if I do not serve him or her in his or her need. The position regarding Harijans is infinitely worse, because we ourselves are responsible for the condition to which Harijans have been reduced. For their drinking, eating carrion, and other unclean habits we are directly responsible Therefore, if we are true, we have to embrace them in spite of their shortcomings; and I hope, not without foundation, that immediately you adopt an attitude of mind looking upon the Harijans as your brothers they will change their habits. People who had experience in this direction will confirm this statement. It is therefore first necessary that *savarna* Hindus should purify their hearts and change their attitude towards Harijans.

I would ask you, please, not to fling in my face bad cases you may have come across—cases where you befriended Harijans and they refused to improve.

But having uttered this word of caution, I want to give you my evidence. I do not know a single Harijan adopted by a Hindu who has not reformed himself. As a matter of fact, it cannot be otherwise. The Harijan is bound to feel the change to be too good to be true. The novel experience of his improved surroundings will enable him to get rid of the craving for drink or carrion-eating. As for cleanliness it is a question of facilities made available to him. It is merely the cussedness of the *savarna* Hindus that employs the arguments about the uncleanliness of the Harijans, so that they themselves need not act correctly

I will close with a material thought. I have told you exactly my views of the duty of every *savarna* Hindu to Harijans. There are many more things that the *savarna* Hindu can do in his own personal conduct.

But I know that there will be a lot of discussion among members assembled here as to how to conduct the work of Harijan Sevak Sanghs without money. I say to such delegates that the fear comes out of their own want of faith. We want to move not half a dozen *savarna* Hindus, we want to touch the hearts of millions of *savarna* Hindus. Paupers though we are, we find that no Hindu temple has ever to be closed for want of funds. I invite you to study this phenomenon. But do not run away with the false idea that millions of Hindus

always pay to their temples merely out of superstition. There may be a partial truth in that statement. But it is only a partial truth. The better part of the truth is that the people who support these temples by their offerings of pice or rice or coconut or *supari*[1], do so because of an indefinable faith that they are doing an act of piety. And I tell you that you will not be doing justice to yourselves, or to India or to humanity, if you will characterize these things as superstition. I know that superstition is a long-lived thing. There are many monsters of superstition which have been given a long rope by the Almighty. But however long their life, it is nothing in the cycle of Time. The better half of the truth is that there is something undoubtedly holy and true about the faith that takes millions to the temples. If you have faith in the piety of the dumb humanity who support these temples, and faith in your mission, each of you will become little temples and gather pice or rice from the people.

If you remain content with the lazy delusion that a few millionaires like Ghanshyamdas Birla will always send money to you for your work, I assure you that the movement is bound to fail. You will never be able to bring this movement to a successful conclusion unless you realize the need to go to the dumb millions and collect pice or even their rice as a token of their conviction that untouchability is a sin to be got rid of.

Never mind if it takes time before you are successful. Whether it takes a few years or ages you must have unbounded faith that it is the only way to convert *savarna* Hindus and bring this message to every Hindu home. Know that time never runs against Truth. And this is the downright truth: You have to get rid of untouchability or perish. Only those become impatient who want to prop up a mission about whose correctness they have a doubt. Have faith that when all the forces that are arrayed against us—and they are mighty forces—have died down, there is still this movement which will go on to purify Hinduism. But if you lose heart, courage and faith and become too lazy to remain on the watch-tower, do not blame people for not paying. The movement will perish not because of external forces but because of internal weakness. I urge every worker to approach the problem in this light.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

[1] Areca-nut

45. LETTER TO BALKRISHNA BHAVE

BANGALORE,
June 11, 1936

CHI. BALKRISHNA,

When you go for change of air or take other cures it never occurs to me that you do it out of attachment for life. The body is a field of duty. We must maintain it by taking proper care of it and for that reason you should take all the necessary treatment I am greedy to take a lot of service from you and that is one of the reasons why I make you wander from place to place. As long as you are weak you will have to take service from others wherever you are I do not see any harm in it if it is done with humility in the name of God. The idea behind it after all is that if God grants you health it will be utilized only for rendering service. My advice therefore is that you should not obstruct the improvement of your health by entertaining any kind of worries.

From a copy of the Gujarati Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

46. LETTER TO VALLABH

June 11, 1936

CHI. VALLABH,

Mahadev has already briefly answered your two letters yesterday. "Vallabh" is all right. If you want to add anything to it, I would suggest "das"[1]. First, because it is a simple suffix and secondly because we have voluntarily accepted the dharma of service and also because, the varnas having vanished, we are Shudras. Moreover, Vallabhdas is generally a name given to sadhus. Let everyone in the Ashram abuse you in jest by calling you Swami but outside merely Vallabh or Vallabhdas will be proper. You do not want to become 'bhai' so you are only a half rival of Sardar. You should remain so. Both

[1] A servant

of you are certainly servants. Let him be a 'Sardar'; you always remain a "das".

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy. Pyarelal

47. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

June 11, 1936

DAUGHTER RAIHANA,

It was very good you wired. For us, Abbajan is always alive. This body is but a play lasting "a few days"[1]. However, the *atman* living within is immortal. His body we consigned to the tomb. Our association with it was momentary. He who had taken on the body and whom we loved as our own is no doubt even now watching us May he witness all our acts, and save us from doing anything unworthy.

It was good that nearly the whole family was present at the time.

Please offer condolences on my behalf to all. Who will console me? You know the bond between us.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy Narayan Desai

48. INTERVIEW TO M. V. JAMBUNATHAN

June 11, 1936

Gandhiji appreciated the efforts of Mr. Jambunathan[2] in publishing an Urdu-Hindi dictionary and gave a few suggestions to make his work more exhaustive and more complete

Referring to the Urdu-Hindi controversy, Gandhiji said it was due more to the mentality of the Hindus and Muslims of the present generation than the scripts themselves

The Hindu, 13-6-1936

[1] From a *ghazal* by Nazir Akbarabadi
[2] Of the Mysore University

49. *DISCUSSION AT HARIJAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE, KENGERI*[1]

[*June 11, 1936*][2]

Q You were rather hard in your speech[3] about the temples. The *savarna* orthodoxy feels that we have no faith in the temples and your remark will support their feeling

A. You are begging the question when you say that *savarnas* feel that we have no faith in their temples. They are *our* temples as much as theirs My remarks were addressed to those who have faith in the temples We do not create any hostile feeling in the *savarnas* by saying that God had left temples whose doors were barred against Harijans. For God there is the God of *our* creation. If it was God of His own creation, He would say: "Fools! Do you not see me everywhere?" But God is good enough to forget that we are fools, and thinks that we have enshrined Him in order to purge corruption from our hearts. But when we discover that God whom we had enshrined in our temples permitted a class of His devotees to be regarded as untouchables, we said God had fled from such temples I therefore say we must not visit the temples that forbid the entry of Harijans, and after we have finished with the members of our families we should go out with the same advice to others.

Q Is the Harijan Sevak Sangh entitled to fight caste as we know it, since untouchability cannot go without the present caste going?

A Untouchability has to go in its entirety, but so far as the Sangh as a body is concerned we have confined its work to the removal of the extreme form of untouchability. Therefore we do not begin with an attack on caste, though most of the members individually do not believe in and have discarded from their lives all caste restrictions about food and marriage.

Q Shall we ever at some stage have to attack caste?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary

[3] *Vide* "Speech at Harijan Workers' Conference, Kengeri", pp. 33-9.

A Why not? We recognize our limits and have thus restricted the rate of our progress. When we have got confidence we can change the creed of our Sangh and go a step further. Individuals, as I have said, have gone further. So far as restrictions about intermarriage and inter-dining are concerned, they are no part of varnashramadharma. Both of them are individual matters. No Shastra can compel me to feed or marry or refuse to do so with particular individuals. I urge you to recognize the fundamental distinction between our own personal conduct and the policy of the Sangh, which can only be changed in accordance with its constitution.

Q There were places where Harijans had as a result of the present awakening given up handling dead animals and their disposal There were places where Harijan reformers had to ask their Harijan brethren to give up the work, if only to give up carrion. In some places these had incurred the wrath of the *savarna* Hindus who had declared a boycott against them and stopped all social amenities What were the Harijan *sevaks* to do?

A. It is our duty to protect the Harijans wherever such a thing happens, and if life is made difficult for them, we should help them to migrate to some more hospitable neighbourhood. But the best thing is for Harijan *sevaks* to find out from amongst *savarna* reformers, including themselves, men ready to learn the art of curing hides and tanning. There are tanneries where all the processes from the skinning of carcasses to tanning are taught, and if we have many *savarnas* ready to do this work the awakened Harijans will not fight shy of it. But they have every right to abandon the work and take up anything else, and wherever they will not take charge of it we must take it up ourselves. Let us make the community realize the terrible waste of wealth that is going on from day to day. If we knew the science of dealing with carcasses, we should find that often a carcass pays more than the animal being worn out and starved would have fetched when alive. For the dead flesh can be turned into fine manure; the bones need to be simply charred in order to be turned into rich manure, they are also used to make buttons, handles, etc.; fat which can be easily preserved is precious for various purposes; the intestines are valuable for guts for carding-bows and musical instruments.

Q. But in our place a curious situation has arisen The Harijan community is strong, and they have resolved to face even social boycott. There is only a small minority of Harijans who are in favour of continuing the work of the disposal of carcasses. What advice am I to give them?

A. Of course they should be free to continue their calling.

Q. Even at the risk of being boycotted by their own community?

A. No. Then we should not divide the community.

Q. Have we given up the Temple-entry Bill? Can't we take it up again?

A. We have not given it up. It will be taken up as soon as the conditions are propitious.

Q. Can't we make greater provision in the budget for propaganda?

A. No. If I could help it, I should not permit even 5 per cent of the budget for propaganda. But if you must expend money on propaganda, you may collect money specially for propaganda, but even then the Sangh will ask you to account for every pie you have spent.

Q. In our work we find the existence of sub-castes and untouchability among Harijans themselves a very great barrier. How are we to break the barrier?

A. By removing subcastes and untouchability from ourselves. The Harijans are simply imitating their masters. We have kept them as slaves and taught them to imitate us. And you must remember that an imitator improves on the original, i.e., he disfigures it.

Q. Don't you think that the whole Harijan problem is in the last analysis an economic problem, and that the moment you improve the Harijans' economic status you solve the problem?

A. No. You may solve the economic problem, but unhappily the Harijan problem, which is essentially that of the eradication of a disease in Hinduism, will not be solved thereby. Dr Ambedkar who is economically much better off than most of us is still regarded as an untouchable.

A worker, apparently an iconoclast, seemed to be impatient of some of the forms of worship among Harijans—including even their worship of Rama and Krishna—and naively said. "I know that they worship stocks and stones, even when they say they worship Rama and Krishna. And worship of these, however great they may be, does not inspire me. May I ask them to regard YOU as an incarnation of God and worship you, as I do?"

Amidst the laughter of all present Gandhiji calmly replied.

A. There is this difficulty staring me in the face: I am, you must know, an idol of mud, and those who seem to you to be revolting as ideals are my revered ideals. The names of Rama

and Krishna fill me with hope. So I would advise you to break your incarnation—me—to pieces That will be better than condemning Rama and Krishna which is nothing short of violence to Hinduism and to religion.

"But," replied the friend, "Rama and Krishna were human beings"

You think I am such a fool as to worship Rama and Krishna who existed ages ago? I worship Rama and Krishna who exist today, who have existed for all time, who know my innermost thoughts and who continually correct me. If I were not sure of my Rama and Krishna, existing on both sides of me, I should have gone mad with Sjts. X and Y and questioners like you.

"But," put in C R.[1], "this explanation may not improve matters He might regard you as an incarnation all the more for this explanation!"

Well, then I must remind you, young man, that if you are confirmed in your opinion that I am an incarnation you will find that one day I am no more. Will then God disappear for you?

But Christians also worship Christ?

Let me tell you that Christians worship the Christ who was resurrected. In the same manner those who worship Rama and Krishna worship Rama and Krishna who are more living than you are, or certainly more living than I am They live now and will live until eternity. If ideals of Rama and Krishna are revolting to you, you should advise Harijans to forsake Hinduism, for I am quite sure that if a man does not believe in Rama and Krishna as God he is not a Hindu. A Muslim who says he does not believe in his *Kalema* will be hounded out of Muslim company Do not then ask me if I worship Rama who killed Shambuka and Krishna about whom we hear all kinds of legends. I worship the living Rama and Krishna, the incarnation of all that is True and Good and Perfect.

Harijan, 4-7-1936

[1] C. Rajagopalachari

50. DISCUSSION WITH A HARIJAN COUPLE[1]

[On or before *June 12, 1936*][2]

Not knowing that they were Harijans, Gandhiji asked:

You are a married couple? What have you brought for me?

"We have brought flowers," the bridegroom said

But flowers won't do. You are married and would you ask me to be satisfied with flowers only?

Sir, we have brought grapes too

The grapes are sour Can't accept grapes, can't accept flowers Go and consult together and decide what to give me for the poor Harijans.

"We are ourselves Harijans," they exclaimed, and Sjt Ramachandra put in on their behalf "Bapuji, he is Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan's grandson"

For a moment Gandhiji paused, as he had forgotten that the Dewan Bahadur was a Harijan. And then said

I see, I see. Then it is not *you* who should give, but I should give you something.

We have come to have your blessings.

Of course you have them. Now tell me, are you happy in Hinduism, or will you give up the wretched religion?

We are perfectly happy and we will never give up Hinduism

May I then proclaim to the world that Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan's grandson and granddaughter-in-law are happy in Hinduism?

Please do. We are perfectly happy

"May we touch your feet?" Both did so and received hearty thumps on the back—Gandhiji's favourite way of giving blessings to those nearest to him.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] According to the source, this and the following discussion took place at Bangalore where Gandhiji was till June 12, 1936

51. DISCUSSION WITH A POLISH STUDENT[1]

[On or before *June 12, 1936*]

[STUDENT:] I am keenly interested in rural reconstruction. There is at . . [2] a school conducted by Catholic Fathers I shall help the school from the proceeds of the sale of this photograph[3].

Returning the photograph Gandhiji said

Ah, that is a different story. You do not expect me to support the Fathers in their mission of conversion? You know what they do?

And with this he told him . . the story of the so-called conversions in the vicinity of Tiruchengodu, the desecration and demolition of the Hindu temple, how he had been requested by the International Fellowship of Faiths to forbear writing anything about the episode as they were trying to intervene, how ultimately even the intervention of that body composed mainly of Christians had failed, and how he was permitted to write about it in *Harijan* He, however, had deliberately refrained from writing, in order not to exacerbate feelings on the matter.

"But," said the student, "the Christians among whom the Fathers I mention are working became Christians long ago"

Well, there they foment fresh troubles. I do not know why the professors of a noble faith should assist in creating deadly quarrels between two sections of the same faith.

But I myself am a Christian convert I cannot tell you the happiness and the solace that Christianity has meant to me.

I can understand that. You are using the language of a truly converted Christian. You have a heart to lose or to keep. If the Harijans in India reach your intellectual and spiritual level, and experience your sense of original sin, I would bless them for voluntarily embracing Christianity. Have you read what I have written on my son's so-called conversion to Islam? If he had become a Muslim from a pure and a contrite heart, I should have no quarrel with him. But those who had helped him to embrace Islam and are enthusing over his

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Omission as in the source

[3] On which the student wanted Gandhiji's autograph

apostasy simply exploited his weaknesses. They are no true representatives of Islam. My letter to the Muslims, I tell you, was written with my pen dipped in my heart's blood Similarly there is no redeeming feature about the Tiruchengodu conversions I have spoken to you about.[1]

Harijan, 27-6-1936

52. ADVICE TO HINDI WORKERS[2]

BANGALORE,
June 12, 1936

Gandhiji advised Hindi *pracharakas* who are imbued with a sense of service, not to fritter away their energies in all possible spheres, but to confine themselves to the one work they had undertaken

Gandhiji observed that it was quite possible for anybody, man or woman, to attain full mental development through the mother tongue alone and he considered all those who did not agree with the view as being guilty of treachery against their mother tongue Even if Sir Venkata Raman were to say that he could not explain his researches in his mother tongue, Gandhiji would ask him to keep his Nobel Prize and Knighthood to himself

The Hindu, 12-6-1936

53. SPEECH AT HARIJAN WORKERS' CONFERENCE, KENGERI[3]

June 12, 1936

We should do nothing having in view the threat of conversions. For I am sure that everything that you will do merely to stop them will fail of its purpose. Conversions or no conversions, we have to redouble our efforts in order to remove all the disabilities under which Harijans are labouring. The reaction that we should do something because of the threat of conversions was bound to take place as we are human beings. We may therefore take note of the fact but do nothing

[1] Here Mahadev Desai remarks "The young man could see the deep pain with which Gandhiji was speaking He did not press him to give the autograph and took his leave"

[2] More than 100 Hindi workers, including about 30 women drawn from all parts of the State, met Gandhiji in the morning.

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

because of it. If we redouble our efforts because of the threat, we shall slacken our efforts immediately the threat is carried out, or the moment we find that the threat was empty. Either way, if we slacken our effort we shall be harming the cause. Harijans will feel that the whole of our agitation was, like a soda-water bottle affair, momentary, and that there is now going to be nothing more. Our movement is essentially religious and independent of political vicissitudes. There can, therefore, be only greater and greater dedication on our part. What shall we, then, a handful of us do for the cause, when we find that thousands and thousands of our people are wholly indifferent and will do nothing beyond passing a few resolutions? Somehow or other they do not feel that these resolutions are addressed to them individually. Years ago eloquent speeches used to be made on swadeshi, but speakers did not feel that they were bound to carry out what they said. They took shelter under the phrase 'as far as possible'. There is no 'as far as possible' on the question of untouchability. If it is to go, it must go in its entirety, from the temples as from everywhere else. So if the thousands who passed the resolutions in Travancore were serious when they raised their hands, no power on earth can prevent the entry of Harijans to temples Those of us, therefore, who are working for the removal of untouchability must convince the Harijans of our *bona fides* I have, however, a suspicion that all who have come here are not as thorough in their action as they should be. Most of you do not go far enough in identifying yourselves with the Harijans' difficulties. You will say, 'We believe in the removal of untouchability only to the extent of the Harijan Sevak Sangh programme.' If Harijan workers take shelter under this 'thus far and no further', it will be difficult to convince Harijans that we are sincere. Naturally Harijans want to have positive proofs of daily increasing progress. They want to rise to the highest status that a Hindu is capable of. I ask you, therefore, not to leave this conference without discussing the difficulties that face us. If all our workers were capable of making cent per cent delivery of goods and of becoming cent per cent Harijans voluntarily, it would be well with us.

I do not want to blame anyone, I am simply thinking aloud, and when Ramachandran wanted me to say what should be done I could not put the thing more concretely. It is a question of ourselves feeling the thing. This cannot happen except with the conviction that if untouchability does not go

Hinduism will perish. I would go even further and say. 'I would pray that a religion which damns any human beings because they were born in a particular section should perish.' And I want you, if you feel with me, to pray that it ought to perish if this blot on humanity is not removed. That points to the necessity of our becoming Harijans in every sense of the term. Does it mean that we should start eating carrion or drinking or living filthily? No, we must feel miserable whenever they feel miserable, and try to remove all that makes them miserable. Let us never say their misery is due to their karma, but let us say we have made up our minds to discharge at least a portion of our debts to them. Let us ask ourselves every morning if we have done anything in discharge of that debt. Unless we do this all our resolutions will be a fruitless effort.

Q. What is to be our attitude to those who want to come back to Hinduism?

A. We shall simply say to them: 'You are perfectly welcome,' but you will offer no inducements to those you expect to win back by doing so.

Q. Oh no. That is out of the question. I was wondering if you would approve of any purification ceremony.

A. No purification ceremony is necessary. If they had become converts wantonly, they will regretfully come back, in which case those who take them back may ask them to do some *shuddhi*. I would simply ask them to take Ramanama a hundred times.

Q. Won't you object to a Harijan sevak attending a voluntary *shuddhi* ceremony of this character?

A. I see no objection to his attending such a ceremony, but let him be clear that *shuddhi* is no part of the Harijan Sevak Sangh's programme, and also he should be sure that the man wanting to be reconverted was doing so absolutely freely and without the offer of any inducement The question is: Are you convinced of the downright sincerity of the man wanting to be reconverted? If you are, do everything to befriend him.

Harijan, 4-7-1936

54. *CONVOCATION ADDRESS AT HINDI PRACHAR SABHA, BANGALORE*[1]

[*June 12, 1936*][2]

I had no idea that when I promised to give you half an hour this evening I was going in for an elaborate function and should have to give you more time than I had bargained for. Not that I should not have liked to give you more time. If it had been possible I should certainly have given you two hours, examined you in Hindi, done a little business by asking for contributions for Hindi propaganda, and possibly for your ornaments. But that was not to be. Within a couple of hours I shall be leaving Bangalore. That, however, does not mean that those who want to contribute may not do so after I have left.

I congratulate those who have won their diplomas and certificates today. I hope they will keep up their studies and go on adding to their knowledge every day. Those who go to ordinary schools and colleges go there for a career, read their books for examinations and the moment they leave their examination-hall forget the books along with what they have learnt from them. Many care more for degrees than for knowledge. But those who have won their diplomas today have not done so for the sake of diplomas, for the obvious reason that the Institution for the Propagation of Hindi does not aim at helping you to win jobs. The diplomas and degrees conferred on you are meant only as proof of the knowledge your teachers have imparted to you. It is quite possible, of course, for a few of you to earn your livelihood from your Hindi studies, but that certainly is not our object.

It delights my heart that a majority of the successful candidates today are members of the fair sex. That indicates a bright future for Hindi *prachar* and for Mother India, for I am firmly of opinion that India's salvation depends on the sacrifice and enlightenment of her women. In many of the women's meetings I used to address, I emphasized the fact that when we

[1] Published in *Harijan* under the title "The Question of Hindi". Gandhiji presided over the Convocation, which was attended among others by Srinivasa Sastri, C Rajagopalachari and Satyamurti

[2] From *The Hindu*, 13-6-1936

wanted to speak of our ancient heroes and heroines or gods and goddesses we would name the latter first, e.g., Sita Rama, Radha Krishna and not Rama Sita or Krishna Radha. This practice is not without its significance. Women used to be honoured and their work and worth were regarded of special value. Let us continue the tradition in its letter and spirit.

I shall take this occasion to give you a few obvious reasons why Hindi or Hindustani alone can be the national language. So long as you live in Karnataka and do not look out of it, a knowledge of Kannada is enough for you. But a look at any one of your villages is enough to show that your outlook and your horizon have widened, you no longer think in terms of Karnataka but in terms of India. Events outside Karnataka interest you, but the interest cannot obviously go very far, without a common medium of expression. How is a Karnataka man to establish and maintain contact with men from Sind or U. P.? Some of our people have held and perhaps still hold that English can be this medium. If it was a question of a few thousands of our educated people, English would certainly do. But I am sure none of you will be satisfied with that. You and I want millions of people to establish interprovincial contacts, and they cannot obviously do so through English for generations to come, if ever. There is no reason why they should all learn English, and it certainly is no sure or substantial means of winning a livelihood. Its value for this object will, if anything, become less and less as more people come to learn it. Then Hindi-Hindustani offers no difficulty in studying as English must. Study of it is never going to take the time that study of English would do. It has been estimated that the number of Hindus and Mussalmans speaking and understanding Hindi-Hindustani exceeds 200 million. Would not the 11 millions of men and women of Karnataka like to learn a language that is spoken by 200 millions of their own brothers and sisters? And can they not very easily learn it? The answer is supplied by a fact I noticed very strikingly a moment ago. You have all listened to a Kannada translation of Lady Raman's Hindi speech. You could not but have noticed that the translation adopted unaltered quite a large number of words which Lady Raman had used in her Hindi speech—words like *prem*, *premi*, *sangha*, *sabha*, *adhyaksha*, *pada*, *ananta*, *bhakti*, *swagata*, *adhyakshata*, *sammelan*. All these words are common to Hindi and Kannada. Now supposing someone was translating Lady Raman's speech into English, could he have retained

any of these words? By no means. The English equivalent of every one of these words would be new to the listeners. When therefore our Kannada friends say that Hindi is difficult for them, they amuse me no less than they make me angry and impatient. I am sure it is a matter of a few hours' careful study for a month. I am 67 and have not many years before me, but I assure you that when I listened to the Kannada translation I felt as though I should not take more than eight days to learn Kannada if I gave a few hours to it each day. With the exception of half a dozen, like the Rt Hon. Srinivasa Sastri and myself, all of you here are quite young Have you not energy enough to devote to a study of Hindi four hours each day for just one month? Do you think it is too much to devote this time to cultivate a contact with 200 millions of your own countrymen? Now suppose those of you who do not know English decided to learn English Do you think any one of you would be able to learn the lnguage in a month by devoting four hours to it each day? By no means. The reason why Hindi is so ridiculously easy is that all the languages, including even the four South Indian spoken by Hindus in India contain a large number of Sanskrit words. It is a matter of history that contact in the old days between the South and the North used to be maintained by means of Sanskrit. Even today the *shastris* in the South hold discourses with the *shastris* in the North through Sanskrit The difference in the various vernaculars is mainly of grammar. In the North Indian languages even the grammatical structure is identical. The grammar of the South Indian languages is of course vastly different, and even their vocabularies, before they came under the influence of Sanskrit, were equally different. But now even these languages have adopted a very large number of Sanskrit words, so much so that I have not found it difficult, whenever I have gone South, to get a gist of what was being said in all the four languages.

I come now to our Mussalman friends. They know the vernaculars of their provinces as a matter of course and Urdu in addition. There is no difference whatsoever between Hindi and Urdu or Hindustani. The grammar is common to both, it is only the script that makes the difference, and when one comes to think of it one finds that the three words Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu denote only one language. If we were to refer to the lexicons of these languages, we should find that most of the words are the same. For them, therefore, barring the question of script which will adjust itself, there is no difficulty whatsoever.

To return therefore to where I began, if your horizon goes as far as Srinagar in the North and Cape Comorin in the South, Karachi in the West and Dibrugarh in the East—as indeed it should—there is for you nothing for it but to learn Hindi. English, I have shown to you, cannot be our lingua franca. I have no prejudice against English. A knowledge of English is necessary for a few scholars, it is necessary for international contacts, and for a knowledge of the sciences pursued in the West. But I am pained when an attempt is made to give English a place it cannot take. That attempt, I have no doubt, is bound to fail. Everything looks proper in its own place.

There is a scare of which I should like to disabuse your minds. Is Hindi to be taught at the expense of Kannada? Is it likely to oust Kannada? On the contrary, I claim that the more we propagate Hindi the more shall we stimulate a study of our vernaculars and even improve their power and potency. I say this from my experience of different provinces.

A word about the question of script. Even when I was in South Africa, I thought that all the languages derived from Sanskrit should have Devanagari script, and I am sure that even the Dravidian languages could be easily learnt through the Devanagari script. I have tried to learn Tamil and Telugu through the Tamil and Telugu scripts, as also Kannada and Malayalam, for a few days, through their respective scripts. I tell you I was frightfully upset over having to learn four scripts when I could see that if the four languages had a common script—Devanagari—I should learn them in no time. What a terrible strain it is on those like me who are anxious to learn the four languages? As between the speakers of the four South Indian vernaculars, does it need any argument to show that Devanagari would be the most convenient script for the speaker of one to learn the other three? The question of Hindi as lingua franca need not be mixed up with the question of script, but I have referred to this simply in order to point out the difficulty of those who want to know all the Indian languages.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

55. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

BANGALORE,
June 12, 1936

I believe Sjt. Kodanda Rao to be incapable of having made the claims attributed to him, viz., of being a Congress representative or my 'envoy'.[1] I consider him to be too straightforward a man to make any such claim

I do not know anything about his views on Hindi, but I must decline to believe the statement put into his mouth that Hindi is of no use for Indians overseas, or that he advised the educational authorities there that they should not listen to any such claim put forth by Indian settlers. I should be sorry if it is found that he holds these views, because I think it is absolutely essential for Indian settlers not only not to forget their mother tongue but to keep themselves in touch with the literature and growth of Hindi.

The Hindu, 13-6-1936

56. A WITNESS FROM AMERICA

Miss Mabel E. Simpson of Montana (U. S. A.) writes to the Editor:

> I wish to express my appreciation of your publication What it lacks in size it more than makes up in quality. I greatly enjoyed Mr Gandhi's article on birth-control displaying his usual clear insight into the heart of things. If he had visited America twenty years ago when birth-control was disapproved and now when it is in full swing, he would know that it brings moral deterioration But he would not be able to convince anybody of it, for it also brings a blindness to both moral and spiritual perception that makes it impossible for its followers to discern with sensitivity along high moral and spiritual lines. If India follows the West in this it will surely lose two of its most priceless and beautiful jewels affection for little children and reverence for parenthood America has lost both—and does not know it. Could

[1] P Kodanda Rao of the Servants of India Society was on a visit to Trinidad.

you print a statement of the meaning of *brahmacharya*? I have been asked about it and while I have an idea I am not sure enough to attempt to explain it to others Thank you.

The reader may place what value he or she chooses on this piece of evidence. I suggest however that such evidence against the use of contraceptives is worth far more than that of those who claim to derive benefit from their use. The reason is obvious. The benefit in the sense that advent of children is often checked is not denied. What is contended is that the moral harm the use does is incalculable. Miss Simpson has given us a measure of such harm.

Now for the definition—the meaning—of *brahmacharya*. Its root meaning may be given thus: that conduct which puts one in touch with God.

The conduct consists in the fullest control over all the senses. This is the true and relevant meaning of the word.

Popularly it has come to mean mere physical control over the organ of generation. This narrow meaning has debased *brahmacharya* and made its practice all but impossible. Control over the organ of generation is impossible without proper control over all the senses. They are all interdependent Mind on the lower plane is included in the senses. Without control over the mind mere physical control, even if it can be attained for a time, is of little or no use.

Harijan, 13-6-1936

57. WHERE IS THE LIVING GOD?

The following is taken from a letter from Bengal:[1]

I had the privilege to go through your article[2] on birth-control with the heading 'A Youth's Difficulty'.

With the original theme of your article, I am in full agreement. But, in that article, you have expressed in a line your sentiment on God. You have said that it is the fashion nowadays for young men to discard the idea of God and they have no *living* faith in a *living* God.

But, may I ask what proof (which must be positive and undisputed) can you put forth regarding the existence of a God? Hindu philosophers or ancient *rishis*[3], it seems to me, in their attempt to describe

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 347-9

[3] Seers

the *swarupa* or reality of Ishwara have at last come to the conclusion that He is indescribable and veiled in *maya* and so on I do not dare deny that a true Mahatma like you or Sri Aurobindo, or the Buddha and Sankaracharyas of the past, may well conceive and realize the existence of such a God, who is far beyond the reach of ordinary human intellect

But, what have we (the general mass), whose coarse intellect can never penetrate into the unfathomable deep, to do with such a God if we do not feel His presence in our midst? . . .

So, it is not at all surprising that young men of the present day do not believe in a God, because they do not want to make a *supposition* of God—they want a *real living God* You have mentioned in your article of a *living* faith in a *living* God. I shall feel highly gratified and I think you will be rendering a great benefit to the young world, if you put forth some positive, undeniable proofs of the existence of God I have the confidence that you will not more *mystify* the already mystified problem, and will throw some definite light on the matter

I very much fear that what I am about to write will not remove the mist to which the correspondent alludes.

The writer supposes that I might have realized the existence of a living God. I can lay no such claim. But I do have a living faith in a living God even as I have a living faith in many things that scientists tell me. It may be retorted that what the scientists say can be verified if one followed the prescription given for realizing the facts which are taken for granted. Precisely in that manner speak the *rishis* and the prophets. They say anybody following the path they have trodden can realize God. The fact is we do not want to follow the path leading to realization and we won't take the testimony of eye-witnesses about the one thing that really matters. Not all the achievements of physical sciences put together can compare with that which gives us a living faith in God. Those who do not want to believe in the existence of God do not believe in the existence of anything apart from the body. Such a belief is held to be unnecessary for the progress of humanity. For such persons the weightiest argument in proof of the existence of soul or God is of no avail. You cannot make a person who has stuffed his ears, listen to, much less appreciate, the finest music. Even so can you not convince those about the existence of a living God who do not want the conviction.

Fortunately the vast majority of people do have a living faith in a living God. They cannot, will not, argue about

it. For them "it is". Are all the scriptures of the world old women's tales of superstition? Is the testimony of the *rishis*, the prophets, to be rejected? Is the testimony of Chaitanya, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Tukaram, Dnyandeva, Ramdas, Nanak, Kabir, Tulsidas of no value? What about Ramamohan Roy, Devendranath Tagore, Vivekananda—all modern men as well educated as the tallest among the living ones? I omit the living witnesses whose evidence would be considered unimpeachable. This belief in God has to be based on faith which transcends reason. Indeed even the so-called realization has at bottom an element of faith without which it cannot be sustained. In the very nature of things it must be so. Who can transgress the limitations of his being? I hold that complete realization is impossible in this embodied life Nor is it necessary. A living immovable faith is all that is required for reaching the full spiritual height attainable by human beings. God is not outside this earthly case of ours. Therefore exterior proof is not of much avail, if any at all. We must ever fail to perceive Him through the senses, because He is beyond them. We can feel Him, if we will but withdraw ourselves from the senses. The divine music is incessantly going on within ourselves, but the loud senses drown the delicate music which is unlike and infinitely superior to anything we can perceive or hear with our senses.

The writer wants to know why, if God is a God of mercy and justice, He allows all the miseries and sorrows we see around us. I can give no satisfactory explanation. He imputes to me a sense of defeat and humiliation. I have no such sense of defeat, humiliation or despair. My retirement, such as it is, has nothing to do with any defeat It is no more and no less than a course of self-purification and self-preparation. I state this to show that things are often not what they seem. It may be that what we mistake as sorrows, injustices and the like are not such in truth. If we could solve all the mysteries of the universe, we would be co-equals with God. Every drop of the ocean shares its glory but is not the ocean. Realizing our littleness during this tiny span of life, we close every morning prayer with the recitation of a verse which means: "Misery so-called is no misery nor riches so-called riches. Forgetting (or denying) God is the true misery, remembering (or faith in) God is true riches."

Harijan, 13-6-1936

58. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

[As at] Wardha,
June 13, 1936

MY DEAR AGATHA,

I have your love letter and a longer one from Horace[1]. This is for you both. I did not mean to suggest that we have not to convert Englishmen What I meant and mean even now is that our contribution must be from this side. We must show that we mean no harm to England It is not our fitness which is in dispute. Our harmlessness is, and rightly. This cannot be proved by any protestations made by the ablest Indian representative in England. It can only be proved by our uniform conduct here But our conduct is by no means uniform. Not every Indian means well by England. And the best of us do not wish well in the same sense that Englishmen would have us to. Thus it was very difficult for me to convince the Lancashire operatives that I meant and wished well even in the act of preaching the immediate boycott of foreign cloth.[2]

Do you see that the non-violent way requires patience and has to be worked after the style peculiar to it.

This is not to say that it is wrong for any Indian ever to go there. No doubt chance visits of women like Mrs. Hamid Ali or men like Bhulabhai[3] must be exploited. I can even conceive occasions when men like Jawaharlal might specially go to remove misunderstandings Let us wait for such a time.

C F. Andrews expected here on 18th inst.

Love.

Bapu

From a photostat G N 1494

[1] Horace Alexander

[2] Gandhiji visited Lancashire on September 26/27, 1931, *vide* Vol XLVIII, pp 66-9 and 75-7.

[3] Bhulabhai J Desai, leader of the Congress Party in the Legislative Assembly

59. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

[AS AT] SEGAON,
June 13, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

I have written to Mangaldas[1] during the free time I now have in Madras. If there is time Mahadev will enclose a copy. I hope you did not find the journey difficult. Finish your work soon and come back. Do keep up the walks.

Blessings from
BAPU

SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL
89 WARDEN ROAD, BOMBAY

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-2: Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 195

60. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 14, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

We arrived here[2] at 8 a.m. The train was late. I have your letter. My mind is there. But my body must be here till Monday for *Harijan*'s sake. If the weather is good, I hope to be with you on Tuesday morning about 7.30 a.m. I shall have taken milk on the way. I understand about Lilavati. I do not know who will be with me if any at all. We shall see. Do not worry. I quite see that till the things have shaped, you will have to be in Segaon 'Be careful for nothing.' If someone is at the gate to show me the exact way to take, it would be good. It may be Govind or Dasrath—is that the other comrade's name? But it does not matter if no one can be spared.

Love.

BAPU

[1] Mangaldas Pakwasa, President, Bombay Legislative Council

[2] At Wardha

[PS.]

Some fruits will go with this if the bearer . . .[1]

From the original. C.W. 6348. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G N. 9814

61. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 14, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Kusum must have reached there by now. I do not remember if I wrote to you of her wish to have perfect training in music from Panditji. Alongside, she would like to earn something and undertake some studies, if possible. Or, she might, for the present, give up the desire to earn. Talk with her on the subject and then let me know. We might arrange for her studies, but what is to happen there? You should consider where, in view of her nature, her own good lies and guide her and tell me what you propose. She is as tender as her name implies.[2] In a single moment I could read her whole self on the day we parted.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati· M.M.M /II. Also C W. 8494. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

62. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
June 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

We reached here yesterday morning. The weather is superb. The clouds all the day and a cool breeze, not much rain yet to speak of. I hope, if there is no rain in the morning, to leave for Segaon tomorrow, though my hut is not quite ready yet. Things move slowly in villages. But I know there will be no difficulty about getting a dry corner for myself.

Rameshwari Nehru is with me. She travelled 3rd class with us all the way. Of course 3rd class with me is no discom-

[1] Illegible
[2] 'Kusum' literally means a flower

fort except for the crowds that gather at every station. She had two nights with us in the train. Her tour in Travancore was quite successful. She will be leaving Wardha on Wednesday.

Kanti went to Poona and returns on Friday. Navin stayed behind to learn the art of carving. He expects to be able to carve ivory-goods like what I have sent you.

Ba had a sandal-wood box sent to her. It was no use to her. I thought the best use was to send it to you either to sell or keep. It was left with Navin to send by post.

I hope you are better and the weather has improved. You must find a better place to go to in summer. From your descriptions Simla seems to be none too good.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

My weight on leaving Bangalore was 112 lb.!!! B. P. 156/90. Quite good as the doctor said.

From the original: C.W 3731. Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G N 6887

63. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

June 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

It is a great thing for a rebel to own defeat At last you have a plethora of letters from me! Your humiliation delights me. But you are not to think of making yourself sick in an attempt to overtake my letters. Remember you are in Simla having calls on your time which I have not.

Now to change the topic. You wouldn't be an idiot if you had guessed why I had chosen the brooches with flimsy pins. Your dense head could not see that the purchaser or wearer belonging to the exploiting class would have a solid gold pin put on in the place of the flimsy one. The question is: is the carving of the brooch good or not? Is it neat enough? I gave much time to the selection of the two brooches. Most were loud. These two I thought might pass Your Highness's test.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

It is raining now.

From the original: C.W 3579. Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6388

64. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 15, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Your note. It is raining here well. I expect therefore that I shall [not] be able to get out.[1] Yes, I shall bring the *bhaji*[2]. And I can do without it, too, for a time.

No more till we meet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W. 6349. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G N. 9815

65. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 15, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

Kanti is not here today. I saw your letter and opened it. I am preserving it as you have permitted Kanti to read it. I shall not destroy it till Kanti and Saraswati arrive on Friday. However, no one else will read it

I do not myself fancy Kashi. I gave the advice I did because it is your duty to please Jayaprakash in such a matter. Now there is no question of your going there since Harsubabu himself says no and J. P. does not wish to displease him. Sitab Diyara is your Kashi for the present, and all that you do there with understanding is of course your education Do acquaint yourself with the villagers. Do you pray alone or do other women join you? It is surprising that there is none in the village who can sing the *Ramayana*.

I shall go to Segaon tomorrow. Probably I shall go alone since my hut is not yet ready. Perhaps Lilavati may accompany me.

[1] For Segaon

[2] Leafy vegetable

My weight at Bangalore was 114 lb. and my blood pressure 156/110, which may be taken as satisfactory. Sardar is at Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3474

66. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 15, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Here are some of my thoughts. We should not run the school from a rich man's viewpoint, but have as teachers only those whose motto is service. They should be satisfied with a maximum salary of Rs 15 a month and devote their whole time to it. To start with, there should be one teacher for just one pupil of whatever age. The teacher should prepare his own textbook and impart knowledge through the use of the eyes and the ears and teach the pupil to use his hands for wielding implements to make things. He should himself do what he teaches. It would be better to have such a school in some village. As for you, you have to make the beginning at the place where you are. You can start with yourself. Accept pupils from middle-class families if they agree to your terms. They must pay fees, but one should not depend on this income while undertaking the work. You may start the experiment only if you accept the idea whole-heartedly. You should swallow only what you can digest.

If you understand this, this is what you should do for the present. Put the thoughts before your associates. It is our dharma to run the existing school if it pays its way but those parents who can should pay the full fees.

I have put all these ideas before Nanabhai[1]. He likes them but he is himself so deeply involved that the changes suggested by me are beyond his power. The help I used to get for Dakshinamurti has now stopped.

You may ask me time and again whatever you want to. Kanu is my responsibility. He will be under my supervision

[1] Nrisimhaprasad Kalidas Bhatt who conducted Dakshinamurti, an educational institution in Bhavnagar

whether at Segaon or at Maganwadi. He has my permission to live at Segaon. Hence if he continues to stay at Maganwadi, it will have been his own decision. Now that Kanti has gone to stay with Kaka to attend on him, Mahadev will be left alone. If, on that account, Kanu is required to be with Mahadev, that too will be left to his choice.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]
I have not been giving anything to Kanu.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8495. Courtesy. Narandas Gandhi

67 *MESSAGE TO RAJPUTANA HARIJAN SEVAK CONFERENCE*

[Before *June 16, 1936*][1]

Hinduism is on trial today. Those alone can become true sevaks who have faith in dharma and who have love for Harijans and are prepared to dedicate themselves to the service of Harijans.

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 197

68. *LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR*

June 16, 1936

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I want Parnerkar to visit the Delhi and Pilani dairies. He will, of course, make arrangements about Dhulia before leaving. Anyway, there the work is already well organized. After all we want to serve the cow; if we could do it better by Parnerkar's going to Delhi and Pilani, it becomes our dharma to let him go. You may, therefore, release him. The rest he will explain to you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N 211

[1] The conference was held on June 16 and 17, 1936 at Nareli near Ajmer.

69. LETTER TO J. K. SHARMA

WARDHA,
June 17, 1936

MY DEAR SHARMA,

You are in a hurry. Your business is to convert many. I am pursuing the subject. All the letters so far received show that the restriction is wholesome and necessary. They say khadi does not gain by being exhibited alongside mill-cloth. It is not intended to supplement the latter, it is intended to supplant it. Khadi has a mission of its own. It is part of national education and it stands for new and true economics at least for India.

You are hasty in your criticism of khadi workers. They are working in the light of their experience and for the sole good of the poor. You should understand their viewpoint and difficulty before criticizing them.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 88

70. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER[1]

June 17, 1936

For me the whole of philosophy is contained in truth at any cost.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] According to the source the addressee was an American woman.

71. *LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR*

June 17, 1936

BHAI THAKKAR BAPA,

I have the invitation from Palampur.

Send immediately the sum of Rs. 2,000 which Valunjkar has not yet received. You can always take from him the detailed accounts, etc., that you would require. Do not let his work be held up.

The Bharuch matter must have been decided. Karsandas has thrust on me the responsibility for the building at Vile Parle. A meeting of the Trustees has to be called. I hope Kishorelal has written to them. We may hold the meeting on hearing from you about the convenient date.

I shall of course be going to Wardha for meetings and such other work, even though I am settled in Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1159

72. *LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL*

June 17, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA,

Well, I am in Segaon, though residential arrangements are yet to come. The work cannot be completed on account of the rains. I would be prepared to put you up at Maganwadi or in the Mahila Ashram if you came over. You can visit me from there. Even Ba has not yet come to stay with me. You will have to wait if you must stay with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7061. Also C.W. 4553. Courtesy: Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

73. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

June 17, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I have two letters from you. I am sorry to hear the news from your family.[1] Do treat the patients if you have now gained confidence in your treatment or leave them to themselves; let them carry on with the routine treatment.

Come over here to discuss your own future and Draupadi's[2] too. That I am living away in Segaon should not matter. It is possible to make daily trips from Maganwadi. The air is pretty cool here, the rains have been copious and have not stopped even now. What was the total expense of your travels? Did you achieve what you wanted? Is there still anything else that you might have learnt there? Did you acquire sufficient knowledge of anatomy-physiology?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 253

74. A MESSAGE

June 17, 1936

Every Hindu organization can easily do the following five things:

1. Root out untouchability, treating it as a sin.
2. Take up the service of the cow, which at present suffers from slackness due to ignorance, and pursue it with intelligence.
3. Serve *Daridranarayana* to the extent possible by adopting khadi.
4. Serve the villagers by buying the goods produced by them.

[1] The addressee's elder brother's only son had passed away
[2] Addressee's wife

5. Do away with such bonds of caste as are destructive of dharma.

M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

75. LETTER TO AGATHA HARRISON

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 18, 1936

MY DEAR AGATHA,

This is from my new abode—a proper village which may be defined as a place with no post-office, no store for food-stuffs of quality, no medical comforts and difficult of access in the rainy season. I could add many more adjectives but these should be enough for the time being. This is not to say that I am suffering any discomfort. I have told you this to let you understand the nature of [the] task before me.

I appreciate all you say about news. Jawaharlal is trying to cope with the problem. Let us see what is in store for us during the next six months.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 1495

76. LETTER TO MURIEL LESTER

June 18, 1936

MY DEAR MURIEL,

You have overtaken me. When young Kalelkar described his meeting you, finding you malaria-ridden and asking me to insist upon your treating yourself decently, I wanted to write at once. And lo and behold, your first letter came and now second with Dorothy's.

You are ever before my mind's eye and often in our talks but pressing work here prevents my writing as often as I would to friends and co-workers living away from India.

And how am I to insist on your taking care of yourself? If your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost and not a den of

thieves, you must rest when the body needs it. 'Be careful for nothing' is a wonderful admonition. If we would adopt it in daily life, we would not, in fearful hurry to achieve results, neglect our bodies and then be incapacitated for further work. You have no business to have malaria in England. God be with you.

Well, I am at last in Segaon in the cottage Jamnalalji has built for me. I do not know what the future has in store for me. But for the moment my headquarters are in Segaon. The postal address must be Wardha. There is no post-office here. You cannot buy a stamp here as you cannot buy many things

I dare not write to Dorothy separately. There is no time.

My love to you, her and all the other members of the family.

Kamalnayan, Jamnalalji's son, will be soon with you. You will mother him and put him where he will be taken care of

Yours
BAPU

[PS]

Your article[1] will receive prompt attention.

From a photostat. G N 3807

77. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 19, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Your complaint about my faint writing is quite legitimate. Nor are you the only complainant. I must improve village ink. Village [ink] and village paper is not a combination I can yet advertise You will admit, however, that if I give in, improvement may become impossible. Rebels like you must persist in their rebellion and you will soon find that even the tyrant will have to mind his manners. Perhaps I shall have to give up using this thin paper. Tell me if you were able to read this without the magnifier

You have certainly done well over your sales. I have answered[2] your objection about the shoddy pin for the brooches.

[1] "Tissington Well-dressing", written by the addressee and Dorothy Hogg, appeared in *Harijan*, 5-9-1936.
[2] *Vide* p. 62.

If the answer is not satisfactory, they will, I am sure, exchange the brooches for any article you may fancy of the same value.

I hope you got the sandal-wood box that was separately sent to you. You must get out of this chronic overwork even if it is to be by living in Segaon. I can build you a hut according to your plan. You can drive straight from the station reaching Segaon at the most in $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. You should do it in one hour. You must not drive if it is raining or if it is just after a heavy downpour.

My hut has thick mud-walls, twice the breadth of ordinary brick-wall. The mud is rain-proof. I think you will fall in love with the hut and the surroundings.

Mira is quite well.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C W 3732. Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G.N 6888

78. *LETTER TO ESTHER MENON*

[June][1] *19, 1936*

MY DEAR CHILD,

You are naughty. You will write on all the sides of your letter without giving any direction as to where you began writing in all the margins. Why don't you add one more sheet? But no more of grumbling. I sent Saraswati and Kanti as I thought you would like to see them.

Strange! I have a letter from Maria[2] this week. She shows considerable anxiety about you.

It must be torture to K. that he cannot do just what he thinks is best for want of funds. We have however to take comfort from the fact, God does not always allow us to do what we think is the best. I suppose we don't always know what is best.

Do not make the children write to me. Let them write when they are led to do so of their own free will.

I hope you have completely recovered from your illness. How I should love to see you as hale and hearty as you were

[1] From the contents it is evident that this letter was written after the letter to the addressee dated May 18, 1936; *vide* Vol LXII, p. 416. On June 19, 1936 Gandhiji was in Wardha.

[2] Anne Marie Petersen

when we first met. You were such a picture of health that I had thought you to be incapable of getting ill.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: No 138 Courtesy: National Archives of India

79. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

June 19, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I was about to send you the enclosed[1] for your information when I got your letter yesterday.

I am glad Ranjit is better. He must take care of himself.

I do not want you to issue any special statement about the omission of [a] woman from your cabinet.[2] I think that this omission does not stand on the same footing as the inclusion or exclusion of others. None of us had either the courage or the wish to exclude [a] woman altogether from the W. C. If this is the correct interpretation of your attitude, it should be made clear if the occasion offers itself.

As to the others I am sorry you feel still sore about what happened. You swallowed the Bhulabhai pill in the interest of the cause. And surely at the very first discussion I had said before you had mentioned the thing that there must be Socialists in the cabinet I mentioned also the names. What however I want to emphasize is not who mentioned whom but that all were actuated by no other motive than that of serving the common cause.

So far as I remember, what you have sent me is not the statement I had seen. What you have enclosed I seem to see for the first time. Please ask Dr. H. if he issued any other. Even the one you have sent me is at variance with what the Doctor used to tell me. I take no exception to the expression of his views faulty, in my opinion, though they are. My complaint is that he said one thing to me and said another thing [for] publication. You are at liberty to show this to Dr. H.

I hope you are well. I was following your Punjab hurricane tour not without anxiety.

Love.

BAPU

[1] This is not traceable.

[2] *Vide* Vol LXII, pp. 454-5.

[PS.]

If the writing is too faint to read, please throw away the letter.[1]

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936 Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Mvseum and Library Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp. 178-9

80. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 19, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. As for the school, do only what you think proper. I am in no hurry. I have no doubt about our duty, but there may be some practical difficulties.

Tell me whether you can now read my writing correctly

I am enclosing two letters. Kanu sees me every day almost.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M.U /II Also C.W. 8496. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

81. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 19, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I accept the blame for sending Sharma to you. Please forgive me. I shall not repeat such a mistake. Do you ever listen to anyone's advice? Why then should you act upon Sharma's? Once you revered him, followed his advice and even used to say that it had done you good. That you do not now like his advice shows how times are changing.

I did not suggest to Kanti to go to Kakasaheb. He got ready for the work because he learnt that Kakasaheb was in need of his services and assistance. I like his readiness. It will indeed do him good. Kanti will come to me when Kakasaheb's work is finished or when Kanti wishes to come.

I see that you have already written to your brothers and your brother's wife. I see no politeness in it. I see in it your

[1] In the original this is written at the top of the letter.

stubbornness. But who can persuade you? A man like me has only to watch helplessly whatever you do. Do come over when you have your holiday. My health is fine and I am in Segaon. I expect Saraswati has come today. The letter[1] for the children accompanies this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 338

82. LETTER TO MANGALA PRASAD AND OTHERS

June 19, 1936

CHI. MANGALA PRASAD, JOGIRAM, BANWARI LAL,

I was glad to read your letters.

Mangala Prasad's words run into each other, and his writing can well improve Jogiram's is shaky and Banwari Lal's good. Mangala Prasad and Jogiram should write better.

All three of you should pay full attention to your studies and account for every single minute. Live in harmony with each other and observe simplicity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G.N. 1085

[1] *Vide* the following item

83. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 19, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

Don't you be in a hurry. Mahadev has personally seen how difficult it is to accommodate anyone here just now. Should we not at least have a bathroom and a latrine? These just do not exist. The rains continue, workmen do not turn up as required, and even the mason does not appear so that the culvert is half built. Now I doubt whether we shall have things done within the next month or two. Besides, you have not cured your cough so that you can think of coming over. This is not good. Are you indulging your taste for chillies and oil? I have heard a lot about your fondness for tasty foods. Even here, you missed your spicy things, didn't you? Conquer this weakness. Things are difficult here. In such matters you should not go by what Ba does. That, however, is another thing. Get over your cough by taking salt in warm water and other things.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N 9577. Also C.W 6549 Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

84. G. O. M. OF GUJARAT

It was in 1915 I first met Shri Abbas Tyabji. Wherever I have gone and there has been a Tyabji, he or she has made it a point to come to me as if I was a member of that great and numerous family I do not know what the binding tie specially was, except perhaps that the distinguished judge to whom the family owe their fame had befriended me in 1890[1] when I had come to India from South Africa as an utterly unknown man, possibly an adventurer as some had thought. Not so however thought Badruddin Tyabji and several others I can name.

[1] Actually 1896; *vide* Vol II, p 371.

But I must come back to Abbas Mian of Baroda. As we embraced each other and I looked into his face, it reminded me of the late Justice Badruddin. That meeting laid the foundation of a life-long friendship. I found in him not merely a friend of Harijans, he was himself one. When at Godhra[1] long ago I had, to the surprise of my audience, invited them to have an anti-untouchability conference in the evening at the untouchable quarters, Abbas Mian was there taking as lively an interest in the Harijans as any staunch Hindu. Yet he was no ordinary Mussalman. He had given lavishly to the cause of Islam and was supporting several Islamic institutions. And yet he had never any designs upon Harijans. His Islam had room for all the great religions of the earth. Hence he looked at the anti-untouchability campaign with the fervour of a Hindu. And I know that he retained that fervour to the end of his time on this earth.

The fact is he never took up anything half-heartedly. There were no mental reservations about Abbas Tyabji. At a moment's notice he answered the call of the Punjab.[2] At his age and for one who had never known hardships of life it was no joke to suffer imprisonments. But his faith conquered every obstacle. He put to shame many a young man by his ability to live with an infectious smile the simple life of the Kheda peasant, to share their simple food, travel in all seasons in their rude carts. I have never known him complain about inconveniences which could have been avoided. "His was not to reason why, his was to do and die." He who had once the power as Chief Judge of imposing the death penalty and exacting obedience showed an amazing capacity for submitting unquestioningly to discipline. He was a rare servant of humanity. He was a servant of India because he was a servant of humanity. He believed in God as *Daridranarayana*. He believed that God was to be found in the humblest cottages and among the despised of the earth Abbas Mian is not dead, though his body rests in the grave. His life is an inspiration for us all.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

[1] In November 1917

[2] Abbas Tyabji was one of the five Commissioners appointed by the Congress Sub-committee to study the evidence and prepare a report on the Punjab disorders in April 1919.

85. IS KHADI ECONOMICALLY SOUND?

If by the question is meant whether khadi can compete with Japanese 'fent' or even with the cloth manufactured by the Indian Mills in price, the answer must be emphatically 'no'. But the negative answer would have to be given about almost everything turned out by man-power as against labour-saving power. It would have to be so even with regard to goods manufactured in Indian factories. Cloth, iron, sugar made in factories require State aid in some form or other to withstand foreign competition. It is wrong to put the question in that way at all. In the open market a more organized industry will always be able to drive out a less organized one, much more so when the former is assisted by bounties and can command unlimited capital and can therefore afford to sell its manufactures at a temporary loss. Such has been the tragic fate of many enterprises in this country.

Any country that exposes itself to unlimited foreign competition can be reduced to starvation and therefore subjection if the foreigners desire it. This is known as peaceful penetration. One has to go only a step further to understand that the result would be the same as between hand-made goods and those made by power-driven machinery. We are seeing the process going on before our eyes. Little flour mills are ousting the *chakkis*, oil mills the village *ghani*, rice mills the village *dhenki*, sugar mills the village *gur*-pans, etc. This displacement of village labour is impoverishing the villagers and enriching the monied men. If the process continues sufficiently long the villages will be destroyed without any further effort. No Chengis Khan could devise a more ingenious or more profitable method of destroying these villages. And the tragedy of it all is that the villagers are unconsciously but none the less surely contributing to their own destruction. To complete the tale of their woe let the reader know that even cultivation has ceased to be profitable. For some crops the villager does not cover even the cost of seed.

With all these deadly admissions, what do I mean by saying that khadi is the only true economic proposition? Let me then state the proposition fully: "Khadi is the only true economic proposition in terms of the millions of villagers until such

time, if ever, when a better system of supplying work and adequate wages for every able-bodied person above the age of sixteen, male or female, is found for his field, cottage or even factory in every one of the villages of India, or till sufficient cities are built up to displace the villages so as to give the villagers the necessary comforts and amenities that a well-regulated life demands and is entitled to." I have only to state the proposition thus fully to show that khadi must hold the field for any length of time that we can think of.

The present pressing problem is how to find work and wages for the millions of villagers who are becoming increasingly pauperized, as anyone who will take the trouble of going to the villages can testify for himself and as is amply proved by contemporary expert evidence that people are becoming poorer economically, mentally and morally. They are fast losing the will to work, to think and even to live. It is a living death that they are living.

Khadi supplies them with work, tools and a ready market for their manufactures. It gives them hope where but yesterday there was blank despair.

"Then why has khadi made so little progress if it is such a hopeful proposition?"—the sceptic asks. The answer is the progress khadi has made in terms of the millions, though little in itself, is comparatively the largest of all the other single industries. It distributes yearly the largest amount as wages among the largest number of wage-earners in the villages with the minimum of over-head charges and every pice practically circulates among the people. This can be verified by anyone who would study the figures published by the A. I. S. A.

Khadi has to work against almost settled prejudices among the villagers, against unscrupulous competition without State protection, and against the prevalent opinion of so-called experts in the science of economics, against even the demand of khadi wearers for progressively cheaper khadi. It is thus largely a question of the education of the villagers and the city-dwellers in the true economics for this land of tears. These transcend all religions. Hindus, Mussalmans and Christians who live in the villages suffer from the same disease of poverty and want. If there is a difference it is only one of degree.

I therefore maintain that though yard per yard khadi may be dearer than mill-made cloth, in its totality and in terms of the villagers it is the most economic, practical proposition without a rival. Khadi may be interpreted to include other village

industries for the purposes of a thorough examination of the proposition.

Harijan, 20-6-1936

86. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

June 20, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

I have your letter and fruit. I shall certainly write to you when I need fruit from your end. Generally, Bombay is nearer. But sometimes oranges are almost unavailable in B[ombay] when sweet limes of the South are most welcome.

I am glad Father is feeling better.

I know . . .[1] too needs the hip-baths and sitz-baths. Women are more easily cured by sitz-baths than men.

I would like you both to join the Kodambakkam Committee. I would like you as such to visit the Institution at least once a week when you are in Madras and inspect the work and make inspection report. You should come in touch with the inmates.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: C.W. 9608. Courtesy: S. Ambujammal

87. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 20, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

I have not heard from you for a long time as it seems to me.

How is the school going? Is Rukmini causing further trouble?

Please pass the enclosed[2] on to Thadani. The article gives another method [of] interpreting the Vedas. Is his theory making any headway?

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 918

[1] Two words here are smudged in the source.

[2] This is not available.

88. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 20, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your letter. What can one say to a person with endless flights of fancy? You would of course want to see Saraswati; that is why I wrote to you as I did. It was neither to test you nor to tempt you. I cannot send Saraswati there. It involves a lot of expense. This I would certainly call *moha*[1].

There would be some sense in your coming to Wardha, but none in Saraswati going there. She will stay here long if she likes to.

The Harijan children who know the Urdu script should be encouraged to keep it up.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 337

89. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

June 20, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

There was no need to have taken a vow to give up chillies but now that you have, do keep it. I wish you to improve your speech. You have formed a habit of uttering thoughtless words This is not right. It is better to accept as true that sense which the listener derives from our words. By this we learn to speak less and that too thoughtfully. I am eager to have you here but I do not want you to suffer the inconveniences. Moreover, there is another consideration. If I bring you here on the 24th or 25th and go away on the 27th leaving you behind, you will not like to spend the week at Segaon without

[1] Infatuation

me. There you have the opportunity to serve Ba if nothing else. Talk less.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9578. Also C W. 6550. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

90. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

June 20, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I have already disposed of your letter orally.

Many persons are now likely to interfere in the kitchen affairs, but be patient in dealing with them.

Do not try to restrict the group favouring spiced food. Say no to none.

Get the required khadi and have it stitched into garments.

By all means refuse to spare time for Manu if you cannot afford it. It will be right for her to stick to the *sitar*.

Take care of Bharatan's food.

Improve your health by taking the diet you need.

I expect Gajanan has recovered. Ask him to write to me about his health as also about the Sindi work.

Tell Bhanubapa that the Nasik work must not be delayed even for a day because of laxity on my part. The Government office is a new unforeseen factor.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10717

91. LETTER TO ATAR SINGH AND OTHERS

June 20, 1936

CHI. ATAR SINGH, PRABHU DAYAL AND JAYAKARAN,

I was glad to have your letters. Write a good hand, work hard and gain proficiency in the craft.

Atar Singh asks about the benefit of observing silence. It brings peace, conserves energy and leaves more time for meditation.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

The boys knowing the Urdu alphabet should not forget it.

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 1083

92. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 22, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

This is another batch of cuttings[1], of more importance perhaps to you than to me. My right hand is resting.

No more, since we meet soon.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] These are not traceable.

93. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

June 22, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Three rupees have been paid. You have already had letters from Segaon which I leave for a week on 27th to be in Wardha for several meetings.

It has been raining daily off and on. Nothing serious. There was no damage here or none to be noticeable.

Of course, only an idiot could expect customers to cure their purchases of defects I fully expected to make the brooches presentable to the royalty adding the extra cost entailed in doing so. However, it is something that you thought at last of the right thing.

I see nothing wrong in your trying to give to Arjan the best of your knowledge and experience. Ba did not want the sandal-wood casket. Now for profuse apologies.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original. C W. 3733. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N 6889

94. LETTER TO DR. B. PATTABHI SITARAMAYYA

June 22, 1936

DEAR DR. PATTABHI,

You have a brilliant boy, quite like his father. But he does not seem to have been able to carry the whole joke to you. When I saw Mrs. P. decked literally from top to toe, I said. "Now I know why Father was afraid to come to Bangalore.[1] For the sin of this barbarity is more on Father's shoulders than Mother's." Now you may take the joke as seriously as you like. I quite agree with your philosophy. Wives and grown-up children must have vacation from their husbands and parents.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

Incidents of Gandhiji's Life, p. 226

[1] Gandhiji and Vallabhbhai Patel, who were in Bangalore some days previously had asked the addressee to come over He did not go.

95. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

June 22, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

I have both your letters. I have not yet been able to read the articles. I am returning with minor changes the one you wanted. My idea about the office would be a little different. If you come to hold the same view it is as well. But if I set out to incorporate it in your article, the language would be changed and the article would take a different form. I do not think it necessary. Let your own idea get around. I am writing my own article and it may be ready by Tuesday. You may, if you like, withhold the article in question till then. And after seeing my article if you want to revise it you may do so. However I see no need for that. Anyway do what you think best. Consult Sardar if you like.

I understand what you say about Premchandji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C.W. 7602. Courtesy: K. M. Munshi

96. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

June 22, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your letter just now. You are very clever. There is still nothing certain about your coming and you ask me about Segaon. After you have got the leave you can ask me telegraphically or if you are not impatient you can ask me after you have arrived.

It is not proper that you keep falling ill. You will certainly not get Father's disease, provided you take milk and fruit regularly, garlic with vegetables or curds, regular exercise, hip-bath and friction-bath. You will never fall ill if you do this.

My letter bore the postmark of the following day because I wrote it after the clearance of the mail.

I am in good health and take the usual food without any change. The weight was 112 lb. when I left Bangalore.

I shall be going to Maganwadi on the 27th for a week.

The mail is delivered in Segaon once a week, so you should address your letter to Maganwadi, Wardha, only. I get my mail every day from there.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mirabehn is well. Balwantsinha and Munnalal are with me. Ba is at Maganwadi.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3475

97. LETTER TO JAYANT E. PATEL

June 22, 1936

BHAI JAYANTBHAI,

If you cannot leave your wife and if you are truly free from lust, you can be a true teacher to her and make of her an accomplished woman. If your *brahmacharya* is only theoretical, then it is better given up.

I cannot give you more guidance than this.

JAYANTBHAI E. PATEL
CHAMPAKLAL BROS.
143 PRINCESS STREET
SAI BHUVAN, BOMBAY

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

98. LETTER TO SURENDRA

June 22, 1936

CHI. SURENDRA,

Which of your questions have I not answered? I have the impression that I did not leave out anything. Maybe, since I didn't have your letter before me when I wrote to you, something was left out. When this happens you should write again. I do not have your previous letter with me.

Now I have stopped using Nepalese paper. I have yet to solve the problem of the ink. You must let me know without fail when the handwriting becomes illegible.

You must observe this rule for the diet. When the body requires a certain thing you must give it that as a medicine. At that time you should not count the annas and pies. Milk must be considered indispensable.

Balwantsinha has decided to stay in Segaon. He will go anywhere I send him. Let us see whether he will settle down here or not. I hope he will.

Today I shall be completing a week here. There is no question of my not liking it, as my mind was always here.

How shall I address you? I cannot write "Mr." Every Surendra can be addressed as "Shri". "Maharaj" was certainly written in jest but that appellation is being used there, isn't it? "Sadhu" Surendra seems good. "Brahmachari" is also all right. Now have your choice Mirabehn will go to stay at her chosen place, Varoda, on Wednesday.

From a copy of the Gujarati. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

99. LETTER TO SHOBHALAL GUPTA

June 22, 1936

BHAI SHOBHALAL,

The test through which Hinduism is passing . . . [1] They alone can be true servants who have faith in dharma and genuine love for Harijans and who are prepared to sacrifice themselves in the service of Harijans.

SHOBHALAL GUPTA
C/O HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
AJMER

From a copy of the Hindi. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy Pyarelal

100. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

June 22, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

That nature cure is not effective for all ailments is admitted by all medical practitioners.

I see no need for permitting the use of turmeric and other condiments unless specifically required although anyone may take them as medicine.

Unboiled milk cannot be the cause of mucus, but you may start taking *neem* leaves; you may also try garlic. Hip-bath is of course beneficial. You should take it in the morning before eating anything. Then take a walk and drink milk an hour later.

Sharma's book is not entirely reliable.

You may certainly go to Europe if it can improve your health. For my part I have no other interest. But you should follow only the dictates of your own conscience. Never mind what I think about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G.N. 4286

[1] Omission as in the source

101. LETTER TO RAMESHWARI NEHRU

June 22, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I was awaiting your letter. Although you suffered discomfort in coming to Segaon, the matters discussed at the end were essential. God will grant you the strength to follow your duty. Keep writing to me.

You will be glad to learn that Ghanshyamdas's telegram says he has had satisfactory interviews with the Maharaja[1]. Let us watch developments.

. . .[2] must be very happy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 7983 Also C W 3079. Courtesy: Rameshwari Nehru

102. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHAGANJ,
June 23, 1936

GHANSHYAMDAS BIRLA
GUEST HOUSE
TRIVANDRUM

RECEIVED. GOD BLESS YOU.[3]

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 7975. Courtesy. G. D Birla

[1] Of Travancore

[2] A word here is illegible.

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's telegram which read. " . . . Had two interviews with His Highness. Promised satisfactory results next Birthday Anniversary" *Vide* also the preceding item.

103 LETTER TO G. N. KANITKAR

June 23, 1936

DEAR BALUKAKA,

You did well in writing to me. I know the value as well as the limitations of oil lamps and even मशाल[1]. But I thought that some patriotic firm might put a dynamo light [in] the place free of charge or at a trifling cost. I should defend the use of electric lighting if it can be done on my terms.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

SHRI SEWANANDJI
341 SADASHIV
POONA CITY

From a photostat. C.W. 967. Courtesy: G. N Kanitkar

104. LETTER TO RAJENDRA PRASAD

June 23, 1936

BHAI RAJENDRA BABU,

I delayed replying to your letter till Ceresole arrived. He tells me that all the difficulties have been resolved. That is why I did not hurry. If there are still some loose ends you can tell me on coming here. I shall leave here on the 27th. I am now using my left hand, having overworked the right one.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi: C.W. 9875. Courtesy. Rajendra Prasad

[1] A torch or flame

105. DISCUSSION WITH PIERRE CERESOLE AND CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES[1]

[About *June 23, 1936*][2]

[PIERRE CERESOLE]: Religion which should bind us divides us. Is it not a sorry spectacle that whilst people of various denominations find no difficulty in working together all day in hearty co-operation, they must disband when the time for prayer comes? Is religion then meant to divide us?

Must it be allowed to become an expression of conceit rather than of a desire to be of service? I want some sort of religious communion between men of different faiths.

[GANDHIJI]: Quite possible, if there is no mental reservation.

[P. C.] But a friend of mine, a great humanitarian worker, believes that but for evangelism he should not have taken up his mission work. He gets the driving power from communion with Jesus, he says, because Jesus was always in communion with God.

[G.] The greatest trouble with us is not that a Christian missionary should rely on his own experience, but that he should dispute the evidence of a Hindu devotee's life. Just as he has his spiritual experience and the joy of communion, even so has a Hindu.

Dr. Ceresole seemed to have no doubt about this, and he said that the broadest view of Christianity seemed to him to have been presented by Frank Lenwood, whose book *Jesus—Lord or Leader*, deserved to be better known than it is. "He says he has the greatest respect for the personality of Jesus, but he thought he might respectfully criticize him."

[MISSIONARY LADY]. I have not had the time or desire to evangelize. The Church at home would be happy if through our hospital more people would be led to Christian lives.

[G.] But whilst you give the medical help you expect the reward in the shape of your patients becoming Christians.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Pierre Ceresole, founder of Service Civil International—a moral equivalent for war—met Gandhiji at Segaon with two other missionary women.

[2] Ceresole arrived in Wardha presumably on 23-6-1936; *vide* the preceding item.

[M L] Yes, the reward is expected Otherwise there are many other places in the world which need our service. But instead of going there, we come here.

[G.] There is the kink. At the back of your mind there is not pure service for its sake, but the result of service in the shape of many people coming to the Christian fold.

[M.L] In my own work there is no ulterior motive. I care for people, I alleviate pain, because I cannot do otherwise The source of this is my loyalty to Jesus who ministered to suffering humanity. At the back of my mind there is, I admit, the desire that people may find the same joy in Jesus that I find. Where is the kink?

[G.] The kink is in the Church thinking that there are people in whom certain things are lacking and that you must supply them whether they want them or not. If you simply say to your patients, 'You have taken the medicine I gave you. Thank God, He has healed you. Don't come again,' you have done your duty. But if you also say, 'How nice it would be if you had the same faith in Christianity as I have,' you do not make of your medicine a free gift.

[M L] But if I feel that I have something medically and spiritually which I can give, how can I keep it?

[G.] There is a way out of the difficulty. You must feel that what you possess your patient also can possess but through a different route. You will say to yourself, 'I have come through this route, you may come through a different route.' Why should you want him to pass through your university and no other?

[M L] Because I have my partiality for my Alma Mater

[G.] There is my difficulty. Because you adore your mother, you cannot wish that all the rest were your mother's children.

[M L] That is a physical impossibility.

[G.] Then this one is a spiritual impossibility. God has the whole humanity as His children. How can I limit God's grace by my little mind and say this is the only way?

[M L] I do not say it is the only way There might be a better way

[G.] If you concede that there might be a better way, you have surrendered your point.

[M L] Well, if you say that you have found your way, I am not so terrifically concerned with you I will deal with one who is floundering in mud

[G.] Will you judge him? Have you people not floundered? Why will you present your particular brand of truth to all?

[M.L.] I must present to them the medicine I know

[G.] Then you will say, to him, 'Have you seen your own doctor?' You will send him to his doctor, ask the doctor to take charge of him. You will perhaps consult that doctor, you will discuss with him the diagnosis, and will convince him or allow yourself to be convinced by him. But there you are dealing with a wretched physical thing. Here we are dealing with a spiritual thing where you cannot go through all these necessary investigations. What I plead for is humanity. You do not claim freedom from hypocrisy for the Christian Church?

DR. CERESOLE: Most of us believe our religion to be the best and they have not the slightest idea of what other religions have revealed to their adherents. Dr. . . .[1] has made a careful study of the Hindu scriptures, and he has observed what Hinduism gives to the Hindus.

[G.] I say it is not enough for him to read the *Song Celestial* or the Koran. It is necessary for him to read the Koran with Islamic spectacles and the *Gita* with Hindu spectacles, just as he would expect me to read the Bible with Christian spectacles. I would ask him: 'Have you read the *Gita* as reverently as I have or even as reverently as I have read the Bible?' I tell you I have not read as many books on Hinduism as I have about Christianity. And yet I did not come to the conclusion that Christianity or Hinduism was the ONLY way.

Gandhiji discussed the instance of Mr. Stokes—now Shri Satyanand—who was, in his early years in India, nearly killed for preaching Christianity to the Pathans, but who in a truly Christian spirit secured his assailant's reprieve, and who in the later years said to himself, 'My faith in Jesus is as bright as ever, but I cannot deliver the message of Jesus to the Hindus unless I become a Hindu. Unless I make the Hindus better Hindus I shall not,' he said, 'be true to my Lord.'[2]

But then, wondered the missionary friends, what exactly should be missionaries' attitude?

[G.] I think I have made it clear. But I shall say it again in other words: *Just to forget that you have come to a country of heathens, and to think that they are as much in search of God as you are; just to feel that you are not going there to give your spiritual goods to them, but that you will share your worldly goods of which you have a good stock.*

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Satyanand Stokes's letter clarifying his position was published in "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 15-8-1936

You will then do your work without a mental reservation and thereby you will share your spiritual treasures.[1] The knowledge that you have this reservation creates a barrier between you and me.

[P.C.] Do you think that because of what you call that mental reservation the work that one could accomplish would suffer?

[G.] I am sure. You would not be half as useful as you would be without the reservation. The reservation means that you belong to a different and a higher species, and you make yourself inaccessible to others.

[P.C.] A barrier would be certainly my Western way of living.

[G.] No, that can be immediately broken.

[P.C.] Would you be really happy if we stayed at home?

[G.] I cannot say that. But I will certainly say that I have never been able to understand your going out of America. Is there nothing to do there?

[P.C.] Even in America there is enough scope for educational work.

[G.] That is a fatal confession. You are not a superfluity there. But for the curious position that your Church has taken, you would not be here.

[P.C.] I have come because the Indian women need medical care to a greater extent than American women do. But coupled with that I have a desire to share my Christian heritage.

[G.] That is exactly the position I have been trying to counter. You have already said that there may be a better way.

[P.C.] No, I meant to say that there may be a better way fifty years hence.

[G.] Well we were talking of the present, and you said there might be a better way.

[P.C.] No, there is no better way today than the one I am following.

That is what I say is assuming too much. You have not examined all religious beliefs. But even if you had, you may not claim infallibility. You assume knowledge of all people, which you can do only if you were God. I want you to understand that you are labouring under a double fallacy: That what you think is best for you is really so; and that what you regard as the best

[1] Italics in the source

for you is the best for the whole world. It is an assumption of omniscience and infallibility. I plead for a little humility.

Harijan, 18-7-1936

106. ADVICE TO VISITORS[1]

[After *June 23, 1936*][2]

To appreciate all the advantages of walking you must read Thoreau. I have made it a rule that no one, unless he is completely disabled, should be encouraged to come here in a bullock-cart—not even Jamnalalji with his heavy body. In fact I told him that trudging to Segaon and back was for him the best possible remedy to reduce his paunch and to add a few years to his life. And no one should fight shy of it, seeing that European ladies who have seldom walked on roads waded through mire with their shoes and stockings on!

Harijan, 25-7-1936

107. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 24, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

Perhaps the work of begging from the parties named in the enclosed is not beyond you. I do not feel like writing to them. I know you are shy. But you must shed your shyness if you are to render service for which God has made you. You may take Janammal[3] with you if you like.

But you will not hesitate to say no if you find the mission beyond you.

Hope Mother is doing well and Father is keeping up the improvement.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] *Vide* the preceding item; the visitors were two missionary ladies who accompanied Ceresole to Segaon.

[3] Addressee's niece

108. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

June 24, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

There is no harm in undertaking the work for the duration of the Congress session.[1]

Your complaint regarding the paper is justified.[2] I hope this paper will satisfy you.

You should go on educating public opinion about flour, rice and oil. Though these articles cost more, they are cheap in the end We are building up a new economics. Conditions differ from country to country. And, moreover, the rich and the poor have their own economics. Please, therefore, do not lose heart.

I know about *bajra*. However good the seed may be, if the soil, water, etc., are not suitable, the seed loses its virtue.

Here is a four-line Foreword.[3]

[*Be*] *Khudai Khidmatgar* is a book that ought to be translated in all the languages of India. It has already come out in Gujarati, Urdu and Hindi. It will probably be translated into other languages also. It is in the fitness of things, therefore, that a Marathi translation is being published; and the greater cause of pleasure is the fact that the translation has been done by a dedicated woman worker.. She deserves compliments for her commendable venture. I hope that the people of Maharashtra will read with loving devotion the lives of the two Khudai Khidmatgars or Servants of God.

M. K. GANDHI[4]

To be an atheist till one comes to have faith in God is as reasonable as one's trying to cremate the body of a man

[1] The addressee had agreed to organize a women's volunteer corps for the Faizpur session.

[2] Gandhiji had used inferior hand-made paper and ink. The superior paper supplied by the addressee had been given away by Gandhiji to another person.

[3] To Mahadev Desai's *Be Khudai Khidmatgar*, which the addressee had translated into Marathi; for Gandhiji's "Foreword" to the English original, *vide* Vol. LX, pp. 77-8.

[4] The Foreword is in Hindi.

who has entered *samadhi*, assuming him dead till one can be sure that he is alive.

If *bhavana*[1] and *shraddha*[2] can be distinguished from each other, one benefits by joining the prayer with a sincere heart even in the absence of *bhavana*, in order to acquire *shraddha*.

If we are living among primitive people, instead of propagating our religion we should propagate the religion of morality. As and when the doors of their hearts open, they may choose whichever religion they like. We shall have given them general information about all the religions.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10382 Also C.W. 6820. Courtesy. Premabehn Kantak

109. *LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR*

June 24, 1936

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I do not remember to have told Sardar that the Godhra Ashram[3] was running very well. I told him that the Ashram was working and had not been closed. However, you certainly did well in informing me of the situation. Do what you think right.

You do not say whether the decision about Bharuch is correct. I have not been able to understand the effect of the decision. Is that the whole resolution, or is there anything more to it?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4038

[1] Feeling of devotion
[2] Firm faith
[3] Harijan Ashram, managed by Vithal L. Phadke

110. LETTER TO CHIMANLAL N. SHAH

June 24, 1936

CHI. CHIMANLAL,

I have your letter. You ought to recover your health. If a course of injections does it, well and good You must find out why your well-knit frame broke down Believe me it is impossible that the observance of these *niyamas*[1] can affect health; but dangerous consequences do follow from a lapse in the observance of *yamas*,[2] etc For example, the greatest lapses are to be found in the observance of *brahmacharya* It being a bodily penance, the consequences of its faulty observance must adversely affect the body. The same is true of *aswada*[3]. I mention these only as illustrations. It is difficult to say where you might have committed a slip. The detection of your fault, if possible, can now benefit only to the extent of proving helpful in your treatment.

Why is not your mind composed? To one constantly thinking of non-violence it should be like a myrobalan held in the hand.

Sharda[1] may have a change if the climate does not suit her.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.G. 19

[1] Any self-imposed religious observance, dependent on external conditions

[2] Any moral duty or religious observance; the *yamas* are usually said to be ten, but their names are given differently by different writers. According to Patanjali's *Yogasutras*, they are ahimsa, truth, non-stealing, *brahmacharya* and non-possession.

[3] Control of the palate

[4] Addressee's daughter

111. LETTER TO SHARDA C. SHAH

June 24, 1936

CHI. SHARDA,

It is a lame excuse that you had nothing to write about. Many boys and girls engaged in work which is not to my liking keep on writing to me.

Your argument is not worthy of your intelligence. You say that your body being delicate you would like to develop your intellectual faculties to make a living. But you do not see that mental work can have an adverse effect on health. It is a lowly idea to acquire knowledge for the sake of earning money. It is also a mistaken notion that you will be a burden. Why don't you realize that you are going to be a burden if, in spite of acquiring the highest knowledge, you have to remain bed-ridden? I would certainly be happy if you acquired knowledge. I would not grudge it if, like Bal, you studied in a college and acquired a high degree. But certainly not at the cost of your health. Your primary duty is to improve your health. This is of course my view. What matters is your own bent. Now that you have started, continue writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original. C.W. 9971. Courtesy: Shardabehn G. Chokhawala

112. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 26, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

The length of the kerchief is 1¾ of the length of this paper and width 1½. I have no measure-tape or rod here.

Yes, you were free to keep the sandal-wood box for yourself. Ba had expected as much.

There is not likely to be heavy rain at the end of July. If there is, you will walk part of the way. It will be perfectly

pleasant. It is only a certain class of people who die many times before their death. Thank heaven you do not belong to that class. Are you not the lion brand?

No more today

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Mira went to her hut on Wednesday at Varoda, 1½ miles from here

From the original C.W. 3580. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6389

113. LETTER TO NAN MENON

June 26, 1936

MY DEAR NAN,

I had hoped to send you a long chatty letter but I never got the time. Now Esther sends me a reminder. So here is this note to tell you that though I cannot write, I can never forget you. I hope both of you are happier than before.

Love and kisses to both of you.

BAPU

My Dear Child, p. 122

114. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

June 26, 1936

CHI. MARY,

Your letter. The receipt of the cheque and the credit-note for £800 disturb me. I do not know how to overtake this work. God will open the way.

I know Margaret was looking forward to the Assam work.

The Christian sadhu must be a real sadhu. You will tell me more about him, if there is more to tell me.

You must fight this terrible reduction in weight. You should discover the cause and remove it, even if it means another vacation. Are you taking balanced diet? Do tell me what it is.

I am glad you have stumbled upon weavers.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Mira is now in Varoda, 1½ miles from here.

From a photostat: G.N. 6064. Also C.W. 3394. Courtesy: F Mary Barr

115. LETTER TO G. V. KETKAR

June 26, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I have just finished reading your note.

I do not remember the incidents referred to by you.

If you do not strain the meaning of whatever I said, your interesting research does not affect my general position. But if there is in your opinion a real conflict between my remark and your discovery, I have no hesitation in saying that your discovery should be preferred to my remark.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

G. V. KETKAR
'MARHATTA' OFFICE
568 NARAYAN PETH, POONA 2

From a photostat: G.N. 7866. Also C.W. 983. Courtesy: G V. Ketkar

116. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

June 26, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

After I had half torn up Prema's letter, which I am enclosing, I remembered that I should be sending it to you. Hence I joined the pieces.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./II. Also C.W. 8497. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

117. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

June 26, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

What do you want me to withdraw? You say, "You should not have sent Sharma at all. I am not going to follow his instructions." But I committed the mistake of sending him. Should I not now ask to be forgiven for my mistake? I wrote[1] "You used to revere Sharma"; and you say, "I worship no man." Now tell me how we should manage to agree with each other. I, on my part, revere everyone, including you. I thought you revered Kanti, you worshipped Draupadi. What will the worshipper of God do if he does not worship His creation? Will not one holding me in reverence revere my Kanti? But how can I cope with you? You presume to be a veritable storehouse of knowledge What do you care for my grace or anybody's? It is doubtful if you would care for His grace.

To be stubborn means 'to refuse to be persuaded'. Neither by the mother, nor by the brother, nor by a companion, nor even by a poor adopted father like me. Now tell me, who is merciless? You or I? You do not discard your own pride and kiss Bapu's feet. Only when you sincerely reduce yourself to zero and think that not you but God is the Doer of all things, will your self reveal itself to you. At present, however, your pride has been leading you away. Why don't you persuade yourself that the work you have is enough and be content? Why should you take up any new work that Bapa might entrust to you? Your agreement with me is that you will do only what I tell you to do. When did you have my permission to take up new work?

Give the enclosed letter[2] to Lilavati when she returns from Badri-Kedar. Krishnan Nair will learn in due course. The letter[3] for the students accompanies this. Saraswati has gone to the Mahila Ashram.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 378

[1] *Vide* pp. 73-4.
[2] This is not traceable
[3] *Vide* the following item

118. LETTER TO DEVNANDAN AND OTHERS

June 26, 1936

CHI. DEVNANDAN, RAMEHAR, RAMSWARUP, SHRIRAM AND RAMVRIKSHA,

I have your letters. You did well in writing. Out of the four[3] the best handwriting is Devnandan's, the worst Ramvriksha's. The least the learners can do is to perfect their handwriting. If the handwriting does not improve nowt it will be extremely difficult to improve it later. I write a wretched hand and it can hardly be improved in my old age.

And just as we should maintain a neat and tidy hand, so should we keep our heart good and pure. This is the easiest thing to attain.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N 1084

119. LETTER TO SHANNODEVI

June 26, 1936

CHI. SHANNO DEVI,

What can I say to you? Your energies will certainly be misspent on the daily.

From being a teacher you want to become an editor. Although I am your well-wisher, how can I give my blessings to a venture which does not interest me at all?

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] A correction in the original suggests that the fifth name was added as an afterthought

120. BARBAROUS IF TRUE

A correspondent sends me the following paragraph[1] from *The Hindu's* own correspondent dated 8th June at Ramnad:

> At a meeting of the Devacottah Panchayat Board held on Saturday at the Board's office, . . the usual procedure was adopted, viz, the Harijan member entered the meeting hall, signed his signature in the attendance register, receded to the exit door of the meeting hall, and stood all the while till the close of the meeting. . .

I take the following[2] from his letter enclosing the cutting from *The Hindu*:

> I am sending herewith a cutting from *The Hindu* . . .
>
> The Panchayat Board referred to is in the heart of Chettinad and is supposed to be composed of Congressmen or men who had been elected quite recently on the Congress ticket to advance through local boards and panchayats the aims and objects for which the great Indian National Congress stands.
>
> It is shocking to read that a body like this should in this twentieth century have the audacity to compel a Harijan member to stand out of the meeting hall in spite of the fact that he is himself a member of that body duly elected and representing a section of the community and thereby enjoying all the privileges to which such a membership entitles him. . . .

I do not know whether my correspondent is correct in saying that the Devacottah Panchayat is composed of Congressmen. If it is, so much the worse for the Congressmen concerned, for apart from the manifest injustice of the conduct adopted by the Panchayat towards its Harijan members, Congressmen are pledged opponents of untouchability. But whether the Panchayat is composed of Congressmen or not, the conduct of the Board can only be characterized as barbarous, even as it would be of the Legislative Assembly if it made its member Rao Bahadur Rajah stand in a corner whilst its proceedings were going on.

But *The Hindu* correspondent lets the public know that the procedure is usual for the Devacottah Panchayat. It is to be presumed that the occasion for noticing the usual event has been

[1]&[2] Of which only excerpts are reproduced here.

supplied by the fact that untouchability just now looms large especially in the South. Even if the practice of making Harijan members stand in a corner by certain panchayats is usual, public opinion should make it impossible of repetition. Evidently, however, the paragraph does not appear to have caused any public stir. The editorial columns of the Southern Press seem, too, to have taken no notice of the incident which is ugly enough to demand strong condemnation. Thanks are therefore due to my correspondent for lifting *The Hindu* paragraph from oblivion.

Not only is the practice barbarous, I think it is also illegal. The Harijan member has a legal right to demand a seat side by side with his fellow members. It would be no answer to the charge that the Harijan member was party to his own insult. I can well understand poor Harijans in remote parts of India being too timid to assert their rights. And for Harijans, Devacottah is unfortunately remote enough.

Anyway, it is the duty of the Provincial and the local Harijan Sevak Sanghs to investigate the matter and take such steps as may be proper to avoid a repetition of the insult offered not merely to the Harijan member but the whole society, if it is jealous of the rights of the least among its members equally with the greatest.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

121. HARIJANS AND ELECTIONS

The talk I had on my return journey from Bangalore, with Shri. A. Kaleswara Rao and Shri V. Kurmiah, a Harijan lawyer, has been published in *The Hindu*. Friends have written to inquire whether the correspondent of *The Hindu* has correctly reported the conversation. They also ask me to give my opinion in my own language.

The Hindu correspondent's version is substantially correct so far as it goes. It omits the preliminary part of the talk In answer to Shri Kurmiah's question I said I adhered to the written advice I had sent to Shri Gavai of Nagpur, M. L. C. "But what are we to do if we are not one undivided party, and if individuals or groups are not strong enough to act unaided?" asked Shri Kurmiah.

"Then," I said, "naturally you will ally yourselves to that party which gives you the greatest advantage. "In my

opinion such a party is undoubtedly the Congress. It is pledged to the removal of untouchability root and branch; the largest number of Congressmen are to be found among workers engaged in doing anti-untouchability work. But you will do well not to participate in any council boycott or civil resistance campaign, if the Congress is driven to any such thing in the pursuit of its clearly defined goal of complete independence. And this I say, if only because the vast majority of Harijans are hardly equipped for such a fight. Your immediate goal is to vindicate your status of absolute equality which is denied to you in the sacred name of religion by the so-called sanatani Hindus. You ask as if you were only an isolated individual. But all Harijans are not like you. An ocean separates you from the fellow-Harijans in education and understanding. If I am true to you, I must speak only in terms of the vast mass of illiterate Harijans in whose name Harijan members of councils will speak."

This is the purport of the conversation and it represents my considered opinion The reader will be interested to know that this was the advice I tendered Harijans even when I launched on the first civil resistance campaign and prevented Ashram Harijans from either joining the campaign or the exodus from the Ashram.

Harijan, 27-6-1936

122. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

WARDHA,
June 27, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

My whole heart goes out to you. You ought to tear yourself away from Rukmini for a time and [rest your nerves a bit][1]

I fancy that the trouble with Bapa is partly due to the tension under which you are living.

Why should you worry about boys from Delhi or the provinces. If you succeed in training the boys you have so that they become good citizens and wage earners, your fame will spread and you will have to reject applications for want of space.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat G N 922

[1] The portion in square brackets is very faint in the source

123. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

June 27, 1936

My Europe is in Segaon. It is difficult even to wait till September.[1]

The Hindu, 1-7-1936

124. LETTER TO A HARIJAN WORKER[2]

June 27, 1936

Hinduism is not opposed to humanism Untouchability being a disease peculiar to Hinduism, our work in this regard should be confined to Hindus alone. There can be no such expression as a Muslim untouchable. The problem you have to face is due to the peculiar local conditions. If someone who was a Harijan yesterday is a Christian today, we need not take note of such conversion. To us he remains a Harijan so long as he receives help from us. Of course if a person is educated it is a different matter. For instance, if someone is getting aid for his college education he ceases to be entitled to it on his conversion.

Yours,
M. K. GANDHI

[From Hindi]

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy Narayan Desai

[1] A correspondent from Calcutta had enquired whether the Press report about Gandhiji's sailing in September for Europe was correct
[2] Of the Punjab

125. TALK WITH A FRIEND[1]

[About *June 27, 1936*][2]

We all know that conditions of life in a village are particularly hard in the monsoon. Why then should I not begin with that rich experience and wait until conditions were better? I had been nursing the thought of going to live in a village ever since I had heard of the experiences of Timappa Naik and his friends, and I tell you that now that I am there, I grudge having to come here even for a single day. I came this week because it would have been too much to expect all the members of the Working Committee and other friends to tramp to Segaon in this weather. But I may tell you that though I am here, my mind is there.

Harijan, 11-7-1936

126. LETTER TO GITA BAJAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
June 28, 1936

CHI. GITA[3],

You should live up to your name. Widowhood and the married state are not of our choosing No one has control over life and death. Hence remain calm and dedicate yourself to service. I just got the news from Jamnalalji. Write to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Gandhiji aur Rajasthan, p. 204

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] From the reference to the Working Committee meeting it is evident that the conversation took place at Wardha where Gandhiji had gone to attend the meeting on June 27 and stayed on for a week

[3] Widow of Girdharilal, Jamnalal Bajaj's nephew who had met with an untimely death

127. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 29, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This is merely a love letter. Nothing to say except that I am praying for your relief. Do not make any experiments is the lesson to be learnt from this new experience.[1]

Love.

BAPU

From the original C W 6350 Courtesy Mirabehn Also G N. 9816

128. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAM BAVISHI

WARDHA,
June 29, 1936

BHAI BAVISHI,

Unless I write this postcard, writing to you may be delayed. God will surely lead you to where your mind is fixed. You will find no one to advance you money until your experiments succeed. The Bhangi quarter incident is surprising.

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 126 Also C W 4751 Courtesy Purushottam Bavishi

[1] In *Bapu's Letters to Mira,* Mirabehn says: "As far as I can remember, I had tried eating a wild plant *panwar,* as vegetable, which the villagers had recommended"

129. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

June 29, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

Your letter was up to my expectations. Munnalal should have got well by now. He is not very restless, is he? I am sending a bottle of milk. He should drink as much as he can and you can drink the rest or make it into curds. Do return the bottle. I shall send some milk tomorrow, too.

I understand what you say about the well. Let us be patient. All will be well.

Your work is indeed progressing splendidly.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N. 1885

130. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

June 30, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

If there is no satisfactory clearance, why not castor oil or Epsom salt. If you need any other opening medicine, I can send it. Shall I send any vegetable from here?

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6351. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9817

131. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

WARDHA,
June 30, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I destroy your letter, but why does it need to be destroyed?

Your time-table shows that you sleep very little. Why can't you sleep soon at night? Do you worry about anything? You should go to bed uttering Ramanama. I see that you don't sleep during day-time either. You should have some sleep during

the day also. It will be good if you take more milk. I follow your point about Patna. It seems to be your destiny not to be able to live with Jayaprakash and serve him. At Segaon either Balwantsinha or Munnalal cooks for me. Both of them insisted on living there. My food continues to be what it was, i.e., what you used to cook. I continue to take garlic and onions. The weight is 112 lb. At the moment I am in Wardha and shall go to Segaon on Saturday or Sunday. Mirabehn is at Varoda. It is a mile and a half from Segaon. She is alone. When I go this time Lilavati might perhaps accompany me. My programme at Segaon so far has been writing letters and seeing visitors. I dispense medicines to the patients who turn up. How can I say what will happen next? We have there a goat and a cow. Cow's milk is for Mirabehn.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 3477

132. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA AND MUNNALAL G. SHAH

June 30, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA AND MUNNALAL,

I shall find some other remedy for the worms. All my thoughts are with you.

I am again sending the milk today It is no trouble. Yesterday too I sent it of my own accord. I have not met Kanchan[1] so far; she might come today.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.][2]

You may use Jamnalalji's portion, and Nanavati may use Ba's. Hurry up with the weaving shed as soon as the skies are clear. What more need I say in the matter? Fill up the vacancy that might occur. Here too there is sure to be some

[1] Munnalal's wife

[2] The postscript which is in Gujarati is written on the reverse of the letter.

vacancy. The person who has to do the work should find out what must be done.

From a photostat of the Hindi C.W 6995 Courtesy Munnalal G Shah. Also G.N. 8299

133. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 1, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yours is a good report. It is raining here. I am going to try to come on 5th. 6th is the real date.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W. 6352. Courtesy Mirabehn Also G.N 9818

134. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
July 2, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Do not try to come here unless you feel quite up to the mark and the day is fine. Mohanlal is going to the bazaar to get *bhaji* for you and if it is available it will be sent. If the bearer does not bring *bhaji* from here, try Segaon.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6353. Courtesy: Mirabehn Also G.N. 9819

135. LETTER TO NARAYAN SWAMI

July 2, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

Pressure of work has prevented me all these days from thanking you for all the care with which you attended to the arrangements of our stay in Nandi and Bangalore. While I am thankful to the State for the generous hospitality extended

I am asking Mahadev to see that *Harijan* is sent to you every week.

If it is of any use, you may inform the authorities that any views you may express on non-political matters, I have no desire to publish unless permission is given thereto.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy Narayan Desai

140. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 3, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am sending the milk as usual, as also sulphur, a Flit-sprayer and a bottle of Flit. We shall use the sulphur when I come but use the Flit right now. Climb on a ladder or a pile of planks and spray it into the thatch twice or thrice a day. Send back the bottle when the liquid is used up. We shall fill it again.

Ba will not come; Lilavati may. Most probably I shall come on Sunday if there is no rain. But then as He wills.

I understand what you say about the Mahar. Have the labourers started coming?

To you both,

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 8600. Also C.W. 6996. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

141. FOR KHADI-WEARERS

Here are two extracts[1] from a longish letter from a Bihar correspondent:

> I have a complaint against you. I am a habitual khadi-wearer. I have been using khadi since its first appearance. . . If I ever be obliged to give up khadi due to my poor circumstances, I shall be much pained. And the present unexpected increase in its prices without proportion will, I fear, drag me to that verge. . . This will, I think, bring about the total collapse of the khadi movement.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

I am told that you desire to pay more to the poor spinners But from whose pockets? . . It will certainly be death to poor khadi-wearers if they are obliged to give up an ideal for which they stood and bravely fought Your present decision is a great blunder I fear by this you mean to give the movement a decent burial

The following[1] is taken from a U. P. correspondent:

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has so much minimized the importance, necessity and utility of khadi that many staunch khadi-wearers are placed in a fix and the weaker believers have got a secure shelter behind Panditji The Congress has also relaxed the rigidity in the use of khadi and you seem to be finding solace in your determined silence. Would you just guide us and let us know our duty under the present circumstances? Another difficulty lies on account of the existing organization of the supplying source of khadi, the All-India Spinners' Association Under the present conditions khadi is becoming dearer and dearer and its supply is growing less and less The independent and individual khadi producers have been almost debarred from producing even a yard of khadi The rules and restrictions seem, firstly, unreasonable, secondly, almost impossible to be followed, and thirdly, they are applied in an objectionable way and not in the spirit they might have been stipulated by you How do you justify the restrictions imposed on the private khadi producers who have been compelled to abandon their production?

There is a similar complaint from C. P. National Scouts. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was, as has been made clear by him, misreported.[2] In common with the other believers in khadi, till the country has attained its freedom he thinks khadi to be a vital necessity. His doubt about its economic value has a place, if at all, only when independence is achieved and industrialization on a vast scale takes place in the country. Surely no wise man will give up khadi now for fear of its being overwhelmed by industrialization which may or may not envelop India in the far-off future. The restrictions on private producers are intended as well in the interests of artisans, especially the spinners, as the buyers. If they are removed the market will be flooded with spurious khadi resulting in spinners being put out of work and the buyers being deceived If there is irregularity in the working of the regulations, attention of the Secretary should be drawn to it and it will be set right without delay.

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* "A False Alarm", pp. 15-7.

The increase in prices is the only question that demands satisfactory answer. It should be remembered that when khadi was not half as good as it is now and when there was much less variety, it was much dearer than under the new scale and there was hardly any complaint against the prices then ruling. Whilst the buyers have been benefiting all these many years, the spinners had till now practically no benefit whatsoever in the shape of rise in wages. They were dumb and helpless. They could not declare a strike against the Association In the very nature of things, they could not combine, being so scattered for the betterment of wages or anything else. They were in such need of even PIES that they could not make any effective protest. If now the conscience of a few of us has begun to rebel against the wretchedly low wage given to the spinners, we deserve help from the buyers who have hitherto enjoyed the privilege of reduction in prices. The difficulty of poor buyers is obvious. But the value of khadi lies in its social and moral value. If the khadi buyers understand the implications of khadi, they will not complain of rise in prices, if and when it is conclusively shown, as it can be in the present instance, to be due to the increase in the wages of the spinners concerned. If they have the will they will discover many ways of making up for the increase they might have to bear in the purchase of khadi. But this they will do if they have burnt their boats and resolved never to use any other cloth but khadi so long as they are in India. If they leave an escape-door, they will make use of it on emergency. Invention comes generally from necessity. If the correspondents had made up their minds that for them there was no other cloth but khadi, they would not have written as they have done but, like the very large number who are no whit better off than these correspondents, they would have accommodated themselves to the slight increase that has taken place in the price of khadi.

At the same time let me comfort the correspondents by giving them the assurance that every care is being taken to make the increase as slight as possible for the poor lovers of khadi. Let them too peruse the reports from Rajendra Babu and the Secretary, A. I. S. A., Tamil Nad, on the great success that is attending the new experiment in giving unsolicited increase to spinners in their wages. If khadi-lovers will have patience, they will find that, if the price of khadi has slightly increased, there has been corresponding improvement in the quality and durability of khadi.

Harijan, 4-7-1936

142. INFANTICIDE OF GIRLS

It is difficult to believe that even today a cruel inhuman custom like infanticide of girls is prevalent in this unfortunate country. But, the letter that lies before me forces me to believe it. In the village Amarpur, in Bhagalpur District, Bihar, an association to oppose such infanticide among Rajputs has been formed. The secretary of this body has written a very sad letter in this regard. A few excerpts[1] from it are given below.

Dharma teaches us that all souls are one Plurality, being momentary, is only an illusion. Nationalism, too, teaches us this same lesson. We do not think of ourselves as Rajputs, or Biharis, Punjabis and so on. We consider ourselves Indians and we believe ourselves to be one nation and persuade others to believe so. Therefore whether from the point of view of religion or of patriotism we are one; the responsibility of the misconduct of any one falls on all of us. For this reason we are all responsible for the infanticide of girls among Rajputs, whether we are Rajputs or from any other community. Had we not been indifferent to one another's faults and troubles, infanticide of girls could not have continued to this day. There is no religious excuse and no need for this. There might have been a time when the life of a Rajput was insecure and therefore the birth of girls was considered calamitous. Today this excuse does not exist. It cannot be said that the lives of Rajputs are less safe than those of the others. War no longer threatens the Rajputs. Today a Rajput does not have to sleep with his sword by his side. There is still a Rajput community, no doubt, but there is nothing like the special dharma of the Rajputs. Why then this infanticide of girls? Why should girls be a burden? The burden certainly is on those who buy husbands for their daughters and have to pay such exorbitant prices that they are all but ruined. It is God's mercy that they have not reached the stage of killing their daughters. I am not aware if any excuse is put forward for the infanticide of Rajput girls. If there is any such excuse, it is the duty of this new association to throw light on the subject.

But even if there is a cause, it is our duty to remove it. No excuse can be accepted for the continuance of this barbarous

[1] These are not translated here.

custom. Public opinion must be mobilized to abolish this custom soon. The burden of mobilizing public opinion must fall on the Rajput Kanya Vadha Virodhini Sabha This endeavour will not bear fruit by long speeches nor by passing resolutions. A little of both these will be needed But the most important thing is a complete picture of the facts. You should prepare a chart which should tell at one glance where the infanticide of girls takes place and the number of girls killed in the previous year. It may be difficult to obtain the number of girls killed, it may even be impossible. The point is that all available information must be gathered and the Sabha's message conveyed to every home where there is a possibility of such an incident. Mere publishing of the resolutions in newspapers will have no effect on the parents who resort to this practice. It is important for the workers of the Sabha to remember that they should not exaggerate facts in any way. By ceaseless, sincere and peaceful efforts success in this cause can be attained soon. This is what I think and believe

[From Hindi]

Harijan Sevak, 4-7-1936

143. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

WARDHA,
July 4, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I still entertain the hope of coming tomorrow. No more just now. I am in the midst of a meeting.

Love.

BAPU

From the original C W 6355 Courtesy Mirabehn Also G N 9821

144. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

July 4, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am sending the milk and the Flit. I expect to reach there tomorrow when I shall go into the Mahar problem.

Blessings to you both from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 8599 Also C W. 6997. Courtesy Munnalal G. Shah

145. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 4, 1936

CHI. KANU,

Only half the work has been done. As you spoke to me of seven annas I mentioned the same amount to Govind. He promptly gave me four annas and will be giving the three now. I shall send the money there. Debit it to the expense account and credit it on getting it from there.

Ramjilal may take his meals there as he pays for his board.

Never mind the Flit tin. I shall enter it into the accounts here.

You may change the time for the recitation of the *Ramayana* though we shall revert to the existing practice after I come. . . .[1] it is good to have accounts which suit the convenience of all.

Send the pair of tongs which was set apart exclusively for my use, as also the griddle, and the saucepan if they have come back after welding. They get Marathi newspapers there; please send one or two of them. I should now have a reed pen. For Munnalal a letter pad of ordinary unlined paper. Enclosed please find [letters] for Krishnadas, Kaka, Shambhu Dayal. . . .[2]

I hope you are in very good humour.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Tell Mahadev, if he is there when you get this, that I don't need fruit.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M.M.U./XXI

[1] &[2] Illegible in the source

146. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

July 4, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I had not told Mahadev to write to you about the museum. I had instructed him to write only about the other buildings. You might remember that when I talked to you about my requirements I had stated the need of Rs 1,00,000 for the purpose of erecting the other buildings. Later I included among them also the schools already constructed although at the time of mentioning one lakh I had excluded the school, for I had planned to use the amount for the other buildings only. But the construction of the school has involved a heavy expenditure which the Sangh is unable to meet fully. I had an impression that you had already transferred some funds out of the one lakh to Bachcharaj and Co Now I learn that nothing has been deposited there to this account Hence I sent you a letter[1] at Trivandrum which probably did not reach you. If any sum can be drawn now from this amount, it may be done.

You must have got the copy of my letter[2] to Dr. Moonje. What has been settled with Parnerkar?

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi. C W. 8020 Courtesy. G D Birla

147. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 6, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Having returned to Segaon last evening I can deal with correspondence.

How can a young man of 67 say from *experience* whether men (for women I won't be allowed to speak) become obstinate on old age creeping in?

[1] & [2] Not traceable

Yes, I would gladly forgo the pleasure of having Idiot talk to me by post when she is attending to Malaviyaji who needs considerate listeners like you. How I would love to see him rest for a year! But he won't. He will die in harness God bless him. Nevertheless he departs from धर्म dharma in refusing to rest when both mind and body need to You and I *must not* imitate him, though you are inclined always like him to overdo things. You must recognize it as an unpardonable weakness

I shall find work for you in Bezwada if I know definitely when and how many hours you will be there

You must impose silence on yourself to give your poor throat some rest. Do you know that a specialist has enjoined on Jawaharlal a week's complete silence on pain of having a complete breakdown. Not even a whisper allowed Will you listen? Or will you prove the idiotic obstinate princess who will listen to no one? You will give me the definite date of your coming. Mira is happy in her cottage Her village instinct is a marvel to me

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Encl. for Malaviyaji.[1]

From the original C W 3581 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6390

148 LETTER TO F MARY BARR

July 6, 1936

CHI. MARY,

This is by return post Nothing wrong in your getting registered as a voter

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N 6065 Also C W 3395 Courtesy F Mary Barr

[1] This is not traceable

149. LETTER TO H. S. L. POLAK

July 6, 1936

DEAR HENRY,

This will be presented to you by Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalalji. However much we may fight Great Britain, London is increasingly becoming our Mecca or Kashi. Kamalnayan is no exception. I have advised him to take up a course in the London School of Economics. Perhaps you will put him in touch with Prof Laski who may not mind guiding young Bajaj. Muriel has undertaken to mother him.

Please treat this also as acknowledgment of your letter received some time ago. I am trying to become a villager. The place where I am writing this has a population of about 600—no roads, no post-office, no shop.

Love to you all.

BHAI

From a photostat: G N. 3053

150. LETTER TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

July 6, 1936

CHI. KAMALNAYAN,

I am sending herewith three letters of introduction which will serve the purpose. Woodbrooke is in Birmingham. It is an excellent institution. You should establish contact with these persons quite soon. As I am writing this, I think I should send you a letter addressed to Prof Horace Alexander also. That makes four letters[1] Prof. Alexander belongs to Woodbrooke. Write to me regularly. Listen to everyone, but do what you consider best and what agrees best with the hopes you raised in us when you went. There is no end of temptations out there. Live up to your name[2] and, recalling its qualities, remain untouched by the mire although surrounded by it, as does the lotus. Then all

[1] Of these only two are available, *vide* the preceding and the following items.

[2] Kamalnayan literally means "lotus-eyed".

will be well. Don't delve beyond your depth and don't compete with anybody Your potentiality will develop to its best if you make good use of every moment. Study deeply the *Ramayana* and the *Gita*, reading them every day. You will of course read the *Gita* in the original but also keep with you a copy of Edwin Arnold's *Song Celestial.*

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 3052

151. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

July 6, 1936

MY DEAR HORACE,

This will be presented to you by young Kamalnayan Bajaj, the eldest son of Jamnalalji. I have advised him to join the London School of Economics. But if you think of anything better, please guide him likewise.. In any case, I have asked him to put himself in touch with the Woodbrooke school of thought. The rest I leave to you.

Love to you, Olive and all other friends

BAPU

From a photostat G N. 1425

152. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 6, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have your telegram and the two letters. In the matter of Saraswati, I did what Kanti had suggested. I wired to you at Kanti's instance as you could have returned after seeing her although I was afraid you would not be able to come. There was no question whatever of Saraswati or Kanti going there. We shall now see what to do when Saraswati returns.

What you write about Mahila Ashram is not at all proper. The institution has been growing day by day and girls have had to be refused admission. It is not right to say that Saraswati cannot stay just because Rajkishori, for instance, could not. The reason for Saraswati's not staying was quite different. I don't have the time to explain all that.

I like the idea of your going through the operation during the holidays. Viyogi Hari will tell you more Kanti and Saraswati left only yesterday for Trivandrum. Lilavati is with me

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 339

153. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 6, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

I forgot to speak to you of one thing that I had intended. Nimu wants to go and stay there. Here she has no opportunity for studies. Besides, Sumitra would thus be under her supervision. The subjects she wants to learn are English, Arithmetic, History, Geography (i.e , through Gujarati), as also vocal music and the *sitar* I would send her to the Vidyapith if you thought she could study there and she would not in any other way add to your inconvenience.

She should do her own cooking and of course pay the rent, etc She should give one hour to service of Harijans. She can teach tailoring, music (elementary) and Gujarati (elementary). You are [not] to accept her for my sake. I inquire about it as I would be glad to fulfil her wish if it could be done without difficulty

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N. 9095

154. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

July 6, 1936

BAPA,

At Wardha I can hardly lift my head and read letters, and if I manage to read them I cannot reply to them. And what is more, if I am to live long, I must avoid working till late at night, or in the small hours of the morning.

Do call a meeting of the Committee in August to discuss the subjects you suggest. Obtain Jamnalalji's consent. I shall be occupied between August 10 and 12.

I have followed the point regarding contributions. It is surprising that you had no success in Bombay. I do not think we should cut down on work everywhere, though all the provinces should certainly become self-supporting.

In accepting conditional Government aid for Kodambakkam I can see nothing but ruin. I had mentioned to the Rao Bahadur very strong reasons and I thought he had been convinced. I now see I was mistaken. The chief reason of course is that if the money is not forthcoming from the Hindus even for this small institution, the Sangh or the Hindus cannot take the credit for running it Of course if you say we are concerned with the end and not with the argument, then I shall have nothing to say. But even so I shall insist that considering the origin of the Sangh, if nothing else, our ideal should be not to shoulder any burden that the Hindus would not share. The rest is a matter of method or means. If it is somehow worth while running it even with Government aid, why should not the Committee run it on its own independently of the Sangh? I would be interested in keeping the Sangh's foundations firm and strong, though the range of my understanding is limited to Segaon. Hence the correct decision would be the one that the Committee takes after they have listened to me.

My Malaya or whatever you call it is Segaon, at least for the present. If God lets me spend three seasons here, I would deem it great favour of the Big Brother. But what flattery can work with Him?

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1163

155. LETTER TO K. NATARAJAN

WARDHA,
July 7, 1936

Mahadev has just sent me your letter. The editorial you have sent me from *Unity* is extraordinary. The views attributed to me and reproduced in inverted commas were never uttered by me and, what is more, they have never been held by me.[1] From nothing that I have heard from Jawaharlal's lips have I ever even suspected that he contemplated the use of violence for the attainment of India's independence.[2] It is surprising how Dr. Holmes has allowed himself to be duped into thinking that I had ever made the remarks said to have been made by me. You can make whatever use you like of this letter and to save time you may pass on this letter to Dr. Holmes if you think it proper.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy. Narayan Desai

156. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI

July 7, 1936

Your statement contains a statement of eternal truth. But your previous letter contained a definite complaint which you had a perfect right to make. Indeed it was your duty to do so. Do you not owe it to me [that you should tell me] who were the culprits and what they had done? After all we approach eternal verities only by tackling details in terms thereof. Anyway, whatever glimpses I may have of truth I owe principally, if not entirely, to attention to the minutest details, always keeping the supreme objective in view. Do please therefore help.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy Narayan Desai

[1] *Vide* "Are We Rivals?", On or before 22-7-1936.

[2] The report in *Unity inter alia* said: "Elected President of the Indian National Congress at its recent meeting at Lucknow, Nehru came out for the use of violence in the struggle for independence, and is reported to be planning a movement to shake British rule in India "

157. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 8, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

I have just received your letter[1] I was seeking time to be able to write to you on the events in Wardha. Your letter makes it difficult. I would however just like to say that the letter of withdrawal does not bear the meaning you put upon it when it was given to you It was sent to you after I had seen it. The sending of such a letter in the place of resignation was my suggestion. I wish that you could take a juster view of that letter. In any case I am firmly of opinion that during the remainder of the year, all wrangling should cease and no resignations should take place. A. I. C. C. will be paralysed and powerless to deal with the crisis. It will be torn between two emotions It would be most unfair to spring upon a crisis, in the name of democracy, which it has never been called upon it to face. You are exaggerating the implications of the letter. I must not argue. But I would urge you to consider the situation calmly and not succumb to it in a moment of depression so unworthy of you Why should you not

[1] Of July 5, in which the addressee had complained about the attitude of some of his colleagues of the Working Committee with whom he had differences of opinion At the meeting of the Working Committee held at Wardha on June 29, these differences had come into such sharp focus that seven members of the Working Committee, namely, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari, Jairamdas Doulatram, Jamnalal Bajaj, Vallabhbhai Patel, J B Kripalani and S D Deo, found it necessary to submit their resignation from that body, which on Gandhiji's suggestion they later withdrew Rajendra Prasad, however, sent a personal letter to Jawaharlal Nehru on July 1, explaining in detail the reasons which had impelled him and the others to send their resignation letter All the three documents, viz , the letter of resignation dated June 29, Rajendra Prasad's letter to Nehru dated July 1, and Nehru's letter to Gandhiji dated July 5, not reproduced here, are to be found in *A Bunch of Old Letters*

The differences in the Working Committee, which had become apparent at the Lucknow Session itself, at which Nehru was elected President, revolved round the question how far the Congress could commit itself to socialism in its programme. "The President," Pattabhi Sitaramayya says, "was out of tune with the majority of the Working Committee"

allow your humour to play upon the meetings of the W. C.? Why should it be so difficult for you to get on with those with whom you have worked without a jar for years? If they are guilty of intolerance, you have more than your share of it. The country should not be made to suffer for your mutual intolerance.

I do hope you have accepted the very sane advice of the German doctor.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936 Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library. Also *A Bunch of Old Letters*, pp 191-2

158. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

July 8, 1936

DEAR GLADYS,

I am glad you have accepted a year's appointment from the Rajghat Theosophical School[1] Anyway it will enable you to gain some experience of Indian students and you will certainly be able to give something to the boys or girls who may be under your charge.

Yes, Abbas Tyabji is the one of Baroda whom you had intended to see and who, alas, is no more He was one of the noblest of men I had the good fortune to meet, and you should still nurse the desire of meeting the members of his family. They are all chips of the old block, and especially Raihana, one of the daughters of the deceased. She is not only most accomplished but she is also deeply spiritual.

Love.

Yours sincerely,
BAPU

From a photostat G N 6192

[1] At Varanasi

159. LETTER TO ATULANANDA CHAKRABARTY

July 8, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

I had your letter. I wish you would appreciate my own difficulty. My method of approach to the question is unfortunately different from yours. I would therefore at least for the time being suggest that you serve according to your own line. If your method ever commends itself to me I should have no difficulty in accepting it and for any organized efforts I would not do otherwise than to refer you to the Congress. Do not expect any paragraph from me. You will presently find that if I am to do the village work on which I am bent, I should have to cease correspondence at least for the time being.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: C.W. 1475. Courtesy: A. K. Sen

160. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 8, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

What a strange letter! It won't do if you keep falling ill time and again. Why do you not ask leave of everybody and come away here if you never keep fit there? Being ill, you will not be serving but taking service from them all. I could write to Jayaprakash if you wish. Why don't you say boldly what you have in your mind? You talk brave things to me but, I am afraid, you secretly worry all the while, which is not going to help in any way. Jayaprakash saw me. He writes that in Patna you will be living together. The Banaras proposal seems to have blown over completely. It seems he has already taken a house at Patna. He told me that the place was good. I think you know all this.

Kanti has gone to Trivandrum, taking Saraswati with him. His address is: C/o G. Ramachandran, Harijan Sevak Sangh, Trivandrum. He will return in a month.

Wire about your health as soon as you get this

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 3478

161. LETTER TO JIVANJI D. DESAI

July 8, 1936

I have gone through the Glossary[1] I presume the meanings given are just the ones given in *Anasaktiyoga*[2]. It looks quite all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 9943. Also C.W. 6918. Courtesy: Jivanji D. Desai

162. TELEGRAM TO LADY FAZL-I-HUSSAIN

[July 10, 1936][3]

PRAY ACCEPT MY CONDOLENCES.[4] I HAVE NOTHING BUT PLEASANT RECOLLECTIONS OF MANY HAPPY INTERVIEWS I HAD WITH YOUR DISTINGUISHED HUSBAND.

The Hindu, 13-7-1936

163. LETTER TO NARASINHRAO B. DIVATIA

July 10, 1936

SUJNA BHAISHRI,

If Gokulbhai were not to give me the news of the passing of your life companion, then who else would? He is one of your many admirers. Where is the need for offering condolence to you? I had been hearing about your illness. I did not know anything about Sushilabehn. Truly God tests his devotees. You have passed

[1] *Gitapadarthakosha*

[2] Gandhiji's Gujarati translation of the *Bhagavad Gita*. *Vide* Vol. XLI, pp. 90-133

[3] *Vide* footnote 1, p 133

[4] The addressee had lost her husband on July 9.

through many ordeals. You have to pass all the tests. To those whom God tests He seems to give strength to bear suffering. Your faith in God will make even an atheist a believer. May you always succeed.

Yours,
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

No need to acknowledge this.

NARASINHRAO BHOLANATH
MARINE VILLA
14TH ROAD, KHAR [BOMBAY]

From a copy of the Gujarati Pyarelal Papers Courtesy. Pyarelal

164. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 10, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter and follow what you say. I don't mind how long you stay there provided you preserve your health You can do much work while there. Meditate on what the verses of Chapter II[1] say and try to live accordingly. Be cheerful, concentrating your attention on the duty facing you at a given time. Try to live on milk, curds, vegetables, fruit and *rotli*[2]. Dont' touch dal.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N. 3467

165. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

July 10, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I have your letter. I shall certainly make use of the figures you have given, and I have made a note of the corrections you have sent me. It is good that you are constantly thinking of khadi. That is as it should be. Swadeshi is one of our eleven vows. And from the beginning khadi has been considered the core of swadeshi. Even so, we have very few people giving cons-

[1] Of the *Bhagavad Gita*
[2] Chapati

tant thought to khadi. That is why the khadi activity is not as widespread as it ought to be.

There is chaos in national education, too. There are many who talk about it, few who understand it. Those who understand it seldom put it into practice. But there is no doubt that true national education is as I have described it. Therefore, just as we cannot permit any adulteration of khadi whether it succeeds or not, so, too, we cannot permit adulteration of national education. And if, without our adulterating it even one student pursues it with love, I will say that national education is going on, its future is bright.

But I would not say that national education was flourishing merely because a number of children pursued what passed for national education but which was not really national education. This view of mine notwithstanding, you should go on doing what you can to the best of your ability. Do not derive any meaning from my words, other than that you will have my co-operation when you are fed up with adulteration and seek to introduce basic changes. You once asked me regarding Kanu's clothing. I do not remember if I replied to you. If I have not, all that I have to say is that you need not worry.

Getting used to as little clothing as possible helps towards a healthy body I do, therefore, take care of Kanu's clothing to the extent of preserving his health. At the moment it would seem his training, too, is proceeding fast though the credit may not go to Mahadev. As neither Navin nor Kanti is here, I have to take from Kanu alone the work the two of them would be doing. So Kanu is getting his fill of training in the process. But this is the impression I get. The impression that Kanu gets should be the correct one. For the present I see very little of him and so have not been able to ask him about it. He remains deeply immersed in work and has no errands to run for Mahadev.

It seems Manju[1] is progressing well. Is Kusum[2] keeping fit? Did she gain or did she lose from her recent travels?

Blessings from

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M M U /II. Also C W 8498. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

[1]&[2] Daughters of Vrajlal A. Gandhi

166. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 10, 1936

CHI. KANU,

There used to be two nozzles with me, of which one has come here and the other is left behind. Send it over if you find it I need my *takli* box, which has not come.

The letter to Narandas contains a reference to you. If I am correct, write so to him; write to me also whether it is correct. I enclose the text of a telegram[1]. Please despatch it immediately. The letters to be posted are there as usual. Today you have to bear the whole burden single-handed! Won't you shoulder the work by yourself when it comes to you some day for good? Won't you prove equal to it?

Blessings from

BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending a cheque for Rs. 40 with my endorsement. Send me one or two small bottles which can hold an ounce or two, with corks if you have them there or without.

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M U /II

167. LETTER TO HARIBHAU UPADHYAYA

Unrevised *July 10, 1936*

BHAISHRI HARIBHAU,

I have had exhaustive talks with L.[2] and S.[3] L. has nothing in her She did not impress me favourably. S. did. He admitted that they had both been infatuated with each other and remained so. The situation even now is the same. According to S. the infatuation arose out of blameless service. L. kept mum on the point She was willing to undergo medical examination but I seriously doubt whether she would stand before

[1] Presumably this was the telegram to Lady Fazl-i-Hussain.

[2]&[3] The names have been omitted.

a doctor if she was really taken to one. S assured me that the two of them did not reach the last stage of intimacy as they thought of you and me. I saw L's father at Beawar. From his talks I inferred that he had no knowledge of this illicit relationship and I also did not think it necessary to put him wise about it Her father did not impress me at all. From one of your letters I gathered that you were satisfied that he was really not L's father. But another letter of yours seems to show that you have now changed your opinion. According to L. he is indeed her father. Having examined the whole thing I, have given this decision:

(1) L. should go to M.[1] and live as his wife.

(2) If she does not wish to do so and can remain free of passion, she should observe *brahmacharya*.

(3) If she cannot control her passion she should marry some other young man.

She should have kept her relations with S. pure until marriage. Both claim that they have been pure I, therefore, do not think it is proper for them to associate with each other. However, if they cannot live without each other's intimate company, they should do so openly But in that situation, they cannot expect my blessings. They can then stay neither in the Ashram nor in an institution with which I am closely connected. I fear L. cannot live without S. It is my opinion that she is suffering from hysteria caused by sexual desire. S.'s contact is tainted with passion and aggravates the hysteria

Now you may do what you think proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original Haribhau Upadhyaya Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

168. DR. AMBEDKAR'S INDICTMENT–I

The readers will recall the fact that Dr Ambedkar was to have presided last May at the annual conference of the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal of Lahore. But the conference itself was cancelled because Dr. Ambedkar's address was found by the Reception Committee to be unacceptable. How far a Reception Committee is justified in rejecting a President of its choice because of his

[1] The name has been omitted

address that may be objectionable to it is open to question. The Committee knew Dr. Ambedkar's views on caste and the Hindu scriptures They knew also that he had in unequivocal terms decided to give up Hinduism Nothing less than the address that Dr. Ambedkar had prepared was to be expected from him. The Committee appears to have deprived the public of an opportunity of listening to the original views of a man who has carved out for himself a unique position in society. Whatever label he wears in future, Dr Ambedkar is not the man to allow himself to be forgotten.

Dr Ambedkar was not going to be beaten by the Reception Committee. He has answered their rejection of him by publishing the address at his own expense He has priced it at 8 annas. I would suggest a reduction to 2 annas or at least 4 annas.

No reformer can ignore the address. The orthodox will gain by reading it. This is not to say that the address is not open to objection. It has to be read if only because it is open to serious objection. Dr Ambedkar is a challenge to Hinduism. Brought up as a Hindu, educated by a Hindu potentate, he has become so disgusted with the so-called *savarna* Hindus for the treatment that he and his have received at their hands that he proposes to leave not only them but the very religion that is his and their common heritage. He has transferred to that religion his disgust against a part of its professors.

But this is not to be wondered at. After all one can only judge a system or an institution by the conduct of its representatives. What is more, Dr. Ambedkar found that the vast majority of *savarna* Hindus had not only conducted themselves inhumanly against those of their fellow religionists whom they classed as untouchables, but they had based their conduct on the authority of their scriptures, and when he began to search them he had found ample warrant for their belief in untouchability and all its implications The author of the address has quoted chapter and verse in proof of his threefold indictment—inhuman conduct itself, the unabashed justification for it on the part of the perpetrators, and the subsequent discovery that the justification was warranted by their scriptures.

No Hindu who prizes his faith above life itself can afford to underrate the importance of this indictment Dr Ambedkar is not alone in his disgust. He is its most uncompromising exponent and one of the ablest among them He is certainly the most irreconcilable among them Thank God, in the front rank of the leaders he is singularly alone and as yet but a representative of a very small minority. But what he says is voiced with more or

less vehemence by many leaders belonging to the depressed classes. Only the latter, for instance Rao Bahadur M C Rajah and Dewan Bahadur Srinivasan, not only do not threaten to give up Hinduism but find enough warmth in it to compensate for the shameful persecution to which the vast mass of Harijans are exposed.

But the fact of many leaders remaining in the Hindu fold is no warrant for disregarding what Dr Ambedkar has to say The *savarnas* have to correct their belief and their conduct. Above all, those who are by their learning and influence among the *savarnas* have to give an authoritative interpretation of the scriptures The questions that Dr. Ambedkar's indictment suggests are:

1. What are the scriptures?
2. Are all the printed texts to be regarded as an integral part of them or is any part of them to be rejected as unauthorized interpolations?
3. What is the answer of such accepted and expurgated scriptures on the question of untouchability, caste, equality of status, inter-dining and intermarriages?

(These have been all ably examined by Dr. Ambedkar in his address).

I must reserve for the next issue[1] my own answer to these questions and a statement of the (at least some) manifest flaws in Dr. Ambedkar's thesis.

Harijan, 11-7-1936

169. LETTER TO A. DONALD MILLER

WARDHA,
July 11, 1936

DEAR MR. MILLER,

Your letter of 3rd July to Mahadev Desai. Thank you for the letters you have been contributing in connection with the terrible leprosy in India.[2] I know from personal experience of village workers of the increasing number. Only this morning Mirabehn who, as you know, has now for nearly 18 months settled down to village life[3], was telling me how many lepers have been coming in contact with her, hoping to find some remedy for their disease. I know that she will derive much help from your letters. And

[1] *Vide* "Dr. Ambedkar's Indictment –II", pp. 153-4
[2] *Vide* "The Leprosy Problem", p 15
[3] At Varoda, a village near Wardha

now that I have just begun the village life, I am already making use of the instructions which you have given in your letters

Needless to say your fifth letter will be published. Of course the readers of *Harijan* should know fully what missionary effort has done to alleviate the suffering of lepers. It would be churlish of me or anybody to ignore the medical work of the various missions in India and elsewhere. My complaint is that that work is not done without an alien motive behind it. I could not give you an adequate conception of the barrier that this motive erects between them and the thousands who would gladly take advantage of medical and other help that missionaries could render. You will probably rejoin that missionaries are not deflected from the call which they consider to be divine, by knowledge of the barrier. Persons like me who believe in the essential truth of all religions feel on the contrary that the proselytizing effort prevents so many Indians from benefiting by the unadulterated teachings of Jesus which ennobles life in spite of their not believing in him as the only begotten Son of God.

I hope you will not regard this paragraph of my letter as in any way qualifying my gratefulness for your articles. I felt that it would not be complete if I did not let you know that my view on proselytization could not in any way affect my recognition of the good that is done by the mission, apart from their proselytizing attempt. I need hardly say that this little discussion of my view is not meant as an invitation to a debate on the subject. This letter itself does not call for any reply. It is merely meant to be one of thanks and nothing more. You may expect questions on leprosy as may be prompted by personal contact with lepers which will probably be my daily lot.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

170. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

July 11, 1936

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ[1],

I know you have supplied the Karachi Harijan Tannery a competent tutor for shoe-making and so you have for the Harijan Colony in Delhi We have in Wardha also a tannery to which

[1] Head of a Radhaswami Sect in Dayalbagh, Agra

a few young men are devoting their time principally for their love of Harijans! But we are feeling the want of a competent teacher for shoe-making and other leather manufacture. If we can teach shoe-making to the Harijans and others in village-tanning, they will have an additional capacity for earning and we would be able to have more men if we can add manufacture to finished tanning. If you have such a teacher to spare, could you please lend one for six months? The idea is that the teacher will prepare from among the students a promising young man as a teacher. If you can send such a person you will please tell me when he can come and what he will expect to be paid.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat. G.N 2163

171. LETTER TO UMADEVI BAJAJ

July 11, 1936

CHI. OM,

I want you to send me little Marathi books that may be with you, Madalasa, or anybody else and are not of immediate use there, since I wish to set up a small library here and need Marathi books. They should be textbooks as well as books for general reading. The books will be returned to their owners if my scheme does not work. These should be lent for six months at least. And those books which can be given away are to be given away for good. Send me a list of the books that may be given away. I don't propose to have a library costing more than ten rupees. This will give you an idea of the kind of books I want. If anybody preserves Marathi newspapers I would like to have them, too, after they are read there. This is not asking for any big donation. Nor do the seniors need be disturbed. However, some persons like you can easily undertake such work if they have a thought for the villagers. Do this job with your heart in it. If you do not find interest in it, say no, so that I may plead with someone else.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 343

172. LETTER TO VIJAYA N. PATEL

July 11, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA,

You yourself will write whenever you fancy, and I am expected to reply by return of post. Nor will you apologize for your laxity! Where did you have all this training? I am settled in Segaon all right but I have no facility to accommodate you You may go to the Mahila Ashram if you wish. Ba has not yet come. She is still at Maganwadi.

There is within us divine music going on constantly; it is, no doubt, beyond the perception of sense-organs, but we can believe in it on the strength of our faith. Moreover, just as we have sense-organs, so too we have the *atman* within us, don't we? Hence the *atman* may experience it, being itself beyond the sense-organs. I experience every moment the presence of the *atman* and therefore I occasionally catch the echoes of the divine music. With effort you, too, can hear the music if you wish. It is not the music that another can help one hear One can communicate to another only that which is perceptible to sense-organs. About the *atman*, the *atman* alone can know.

Wait if you wish to stay nowhere but with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 7060 Also C W 4552 Courtesy. Vijayabehn M. Pancholi

173. LETTER TO D. B. KALELKAR

July 11, 1936

CHI. KAKA,

I have gone through Rameshwardas's letter. Since you have offered no comments I do not know what you desire. I shall explain as I see the situation

Parnerkar will not give up responsibility for the Dhulia Goshala. He will keep an eye on it. He has not gone there to take up any other work for Rameshwardas He cannot involve

himself in Rameshwardas's domestic affairs, though there has been some interference on his part. This was natural since he has been staying with the family Both the husband and wife are foolish and though they do not get along well together, Rameshwardas cannot do without Gangabehn even for a moment and quarrels are inevitable. What can anyone do in this situation? Neither of the two can make use of Shivaji who stays there. Gangabehn cannot put him to any good use; though she would certainly misuse his presence if she could. So awful is the situation. If you can see the situation differently please ignore my letter. If your view is much the same as mine, give any advice that you think fit after considering my view. Perhaps the better course might be for you to see Vinoba and advise me as you two decide. But this is only what occurs to me on reading the letter. You should do as you may have decided.

I am returning the letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7700

174. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 12, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I have your letter. *Do not* strain to write to me. You must not thin away. Do not waste your energy. Your letters to me must be a pleasure and a recreation or they must not be written at all. We shall not come closer by reason of letters. Absence of them can't separate us or create coolness. Why should you become a chronic invalid?

Your sense though of an idiot evidently led you aright. For your Simla khadi experiment seems to be succeeding beyond expectations. I suppose I must call it a mere accident. Idiots can't design good things!

The cottage here is a picture. I have just now a young sadhu[1]. He is a great *bhajani*, singer of bhajans of his own composition. He will be with me for a month. I occupy one corner, he occupies another, the third is occupied by Munnalal, a co-worker. The first accommodates a plank bedstead which you

[1] Tukdoji Maharaj; *vide* the following item.

have seen. That corner will be taken up by Ba, if she comes, *and* you. So, you will prepare yourself for the proper village life. No privacy except in the bathroom which you will share with me. You must shudder to think of the fate that awaits you. You will enjoy the newness. There is no noise in spite of the seemingly crowded state of the room. All round is open and beautiful. Fresh breeze blowing throughout the day. It is quite cool Perfect walks all over. When you come for two nights you will tell me what changes you will want.

You are there perhaps much more crowded than you are likely to feel here. All of us sleep under the sky without a roof separating us from it. Nevertheless you should bring your mosquito net and the cork for your thermos which you have made mine. I am managing with the one which is now almost all eaten away.

Agatha[1] expects to attend the Ceylon Conference which you have tabooed for yourself.

This is the newest sample of Maganwadi paper. You will have this in an envelope of Maganwadi make

Love.

TYRANT

From the original. C W 3582 Courtesy· Amrit Kaur Also G N. 6391-

175. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

July 12, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Cooking and washing clothes are no small service. There is an idea abroad these days that only the educated can do public service and the value of cooking and similar work has gone down very much. But did you not see that at Sabarmati the responsibility of the kitchen was entrusted only to a mature and experienced Ashram worker? When the Ashram was first established at Kochrab, I had in the beginning assumed the responsibility myself. Subsequently it was passed on to Vinoba, Kaka and others, and a worker like Vrajlal[2] lost his life while attending to the washing of clothes. Even when he joined, he

[1] Agatha Harrison

[2] Vrajlal Gandhi who had descended into a well to bring up someone's water pot which had fallen in. While climbing up he slipped and was drowned; *vide* Vol. XVII, pp 512-3.

had asked to be allowed to do all the clothes-washing, though he could do accounting and possessed a handwriting beautiful as a string of pearls. At a time of difficulty once, the charge of the store had to be entrusted to him. Without such workers we can never hope to win swaraj.

What I have said above doesn't mean, however, that you may not increase your knowledge of letters when you get the opportunity to do so or that you should not encourage others in their desire to learn. All that I mean is that anybody who hankers after education, neglecting the dharma that has fallen to his lot unsought, is committing an error.

Do come to Wardha before going to Bochasan Gomati will try to drag you to her place. Besides, there are Maganwadi and Mahila Ashram also. Janakibehn is there, too, and, if you wish, you can come to me at Segaon and even stay with me, though we have only one room here for all of us. Only lately Tukdoji Maharaj has come and has been assigned one corner. The room is large enough, 29 x 14, with a 7′ verandah running all round. In one corner of the verandah is a small kitchen and in another a bathroom for me. The walls are made of mud. The entire building is constructed with purely local materials. All around in this season our eyes rest on green fields.

Mirabehn lives by herself in a hut smaller than this room, about a mile and a half from here.

It is very essential that Bachubhai does not ignore any of the restrictions regarding food or exertion.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6. G. S. Gangabehnne, pp. 91-2. Also C.W 8832 Courtesy. Gangabehn Vaidya

176 LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 13[1], *1936*

CHI. PRABHA,

I got your wire yesterday evening and was very glad. I will not tolerate your falling ill as it would put you and me to shame. Why should one who has learnt from me the key to health fall ill? Take only the food that agrees with you, breathe fresh air and take regular exercise. Take hip-bath whenever you need it. Do not worry under any circumstances. This anyone can do. You should never work beyond your capacity.

Ba came here last evening with Manu. A sadhu also has come to spend a month with me. We are all in the same hut. The sadhu is known by the name Tukdoji Maharaj.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Kanti is at Trivandrum.

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 3473

177. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL

SEGAON,
July 13, 1936

BHAI SHRIMAN,

Your letter I could read only just now. I am unable to read the whole mail as soon as it arrives

I am sending *Roti ka Raga*. Return it to me after Kakasaheb does his writing on it. In fact I had understood that my opinion was required solely for your own satisfaction. But now

[1] In the source the date could be read either as 13 or 23 and the month either 6 or 7 However, from the reference to Tukdoji's staying at the Ashram it is clear the month could not be June Similarly the date is more likely to be 13 because it was about that time that Gandhiji was giving out news of Tukdoji having come to stay. *Vide* also "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 140-1.

I cannot find anything to write which can go into print. All the same let us see what can be done. You may come over whenever you wish to. You are not going to take my time, are you? Do whatever work Mahadev asks you to do for *Harijan*.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p. 299

178. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

Unrevised by me

SEGAON,
July 15, 1936

DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

(1) I hope you got my wire about *The Times of India* letter. I procured it yesterday and read it through. Nobody has ever written to me about the subject-matter. My reading of the letter confirms my view that you should take legal notice of the libel.

(2) If you will not misunderstand me, I would like you to keep me free of the Civil Liberties Union. I do not like for the time being to join any political institution. And there is no meaning in a confirmed civil resister joining it. Apart however from my joining or not joining the Union, maturer consideration confirms me in my opinion that it would be a mistake to appoint Sarojini Naidu or for that matter any civil resister as President. I am still of opinion that the President should be a well-known constitutional lawyer If that does not commend itself to you then, you should have an author of note who is not a law-breaker. I would also ask you to restrict the number of members. You need quality, not quantity.

(3) Your letter is touching. You feel to be the most injured party. The fact is that your colleagues have lacked your courage and frankness The result has been disastrous. I have always pleaded with them to speak out to you freely and fearlessly. But having lacked the courage, whenever they have spoken they have done it clumsily and you have felt irritated. I tell you they have dreaded you, because of your irritability and impatience of them. They have chafed under your rebukes and magisterial manner and above all your arrogation

of what has appeared to them your infallibility and superior knowledge. They feel that you have treated them with scant courtesy and never defended them from socialists' ridicule and even misrepresentation.

You complain of their having called your activities harmful. That was not to say that you were harmful Their letter was no occasion for recounting your virtues or your services. They were fully conscious of your dynamism and your hold over the masses and the youth of the country. They know that you cannot be dispensed with. And so they wanted to give way.

I look upon the whole affair as a tragi-comedy. I would therefore like you to look at the whole thing in a lighter vein. I do not mind your taking the A. I. C. C. into your confidence. But I do want you not to impose on it the unbearable task of adjusting your family quarrels or choosing between them and you. Whatever you do you must face them with accomplished things.

Why do you resent their majority being reflected in all subcommittees, etc.? Is it not the most natural thing? You are in office by their unanimous choice but you are not in power yet. To put you in office was an attempt to find you in power, quicker than you would otherwise have been. Anyway that was at the back of my mind when I suggested your name for the crown of thorns Keep it on though the head be bruised Resume your humour at the committee meetings. That is your most usual role, not that of a care-worn irritable man ready to burst on the slightest occasion.

How I wish you could telegraph to me that on finishing my letter you felt as merry as you were on that New Year's Day in Lahore when you were reported to have danced round the tricolour flag.

You must give your throat a chance.

I am revising my statement. I have decided not to publish it till you have seen it.

I have decided that nobody should see our correspondence, besides Mahadev.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

179. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

July 15, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter Don't fall ill again. What was the cause of the last illness? Do you take hip-baths? In no case should you give it up.

Kanti is still at Trivandrum. Nimu is going to join Ramdas in Bombay. Manu will come to stay at Segaon. Lilavati is already here. So here, too, we shall be congested

I seem to be keeping good health, and the food, too, continues to be as usual. For the present, Tukdoji Maharaj is here to spend a month with me.

I have written to you about the talk with Jayaprakashji.[1] When will you be going to Patna?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 3479

180. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 15, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM,[2]

I have your letter today, and I am sending the reply with Kanu so that it might be carried by the morning train

The operation[3] can certainly be performed at Delhi and I shall arrange for it. I shall let you know the names of the doctors when I learn them.

Why should you believe what others say to you about my displeasure? Would I not express my displeasure myself? What a daughter you must be to believe what others say about your father!

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Prabhavati", pp. 129-30
[2] This is in Urdu
[3] For nose trouble

Haven't I told you that you should have from me the money to meet your needs? You will take from me the money for coming over here.

I had a bit of a letter from Kanti. He is happy. He will return in a month.

Have your nose examined by someone there. Consult Devdas.

I think I have answered the questions in your letter. There is no time to write more.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 340

181 LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 16, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

There are tyrants and tyrants. You will see on 22nd how you feel. If the night is fine, the roads dry and you do not feel fatigued, drive to Segaon after having your food. I shall be ready to give you a shake down at Segaon. If the fates are not propitious, you will sleep at Maganwadi and walk or drive, as you will, to Segaon in the morning You must not be tired out in any way. You may brave all kinds of experiences, subject to the tyrant's will, on your return when you are expected to stay for a period.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W 3583. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G N. 6392

182. LETTER TO HORACE ALEXANDER

July 16, 1936

DEAR HORACE,

Your letter was most welcome. You will get a note[1] from me through Kamalnayan Bajaj. But that is a mere introduction. Only it was written before the receipt of your letter.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Horace Alexander", p. 123.

I anticipated you about Agatha. I cabled approval of her plan.[1] Her expenses in India can certainly be found but, on principle, her passage to India and back should be found from your end. That is what I have generally followed.

I quite agree with you that such visits are helpful. Therefore if the Heaths[2] can come it would [be] a good thing.

Jawaharlal is tirelessly preaching his message. He has an unconquerable faith in his mission

Love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat: G N 1424

183. LETTER TO KHURSHEDBEHN NAOROJI[3]

July 16, 1936

When did the pilgrimage become due? If you are merely referring to Khan Saheb's manifesto, it contains no such message for me. The incident is too trivial for me to notice. My undertaking with the Brothers is that I am not to rush without a call from them, unless I have an irresistible urge. I have none of the latter.

Saints are both real and false. The real ones never *want* any noise round them but it does become their hard lot. The false ones cannot live without noise.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy: Narayan Desai

184. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

July 16, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I got your note well in time. It is easy to say, 'May you live a hundred years.' However, it is for you to make the effort. It is enough if we regard our body as a trust held in behalf

[1] The cable is not available. Agatha Harrison was to attend the Ceylon Conference *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 140-1.

[2] Presumably Carl Heath, a Quaker, and his wife

[3] The addressee had informed Gandhiji that there was a call for him from the Frontier to go there silently and had also remarked: "Can't saints do anything without noise?"

of God and use it accordingly. Take care of your body. Take up no more burden than it can carry.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 10718

185. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

July 16, 1936

CHI. BHANSALI,

I have your note. I cannot help feeling anxious. You have to become a model for others. You ought to preserve your health in good condition. You cannot get up without assistance. Why this sign of old age? I want you to do this: Live on unboiled milk alone, or eat any flour and almonds, or take coconut, gram and lemon It is possible to keep the vow of abstaining from cooked food. True discipline would lie in this: You should eat nothing to indulge the palate. By way of medicine, you may take any food in the prescribed measure. Your weakness and night blindness must disappear.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M M.U /II

186 LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

[July 16, 1936][1]

CHI. NARAHARI,

I have your letter. Nimu [is going][2] to Bombay. Ramdas insists that she should now stay with him. He is now engaged in the . . .[3] business.

I follow your point about Ramji. Do not give up your firmness in any case. Service of the cow we shall entrust to Vinoba.

. . .[4]

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N 9096

[1] From the S.N Register
[2],[3]&[4] Illegible

187. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July [*16*][1], *1936*

CHI. KANTI,

You have been proved right and I wrong. What misuse and misinterpretation of a quite innocent statement of mine! Even so, why should it touch you? I have explained to you that you should not be touchy. Our letters crossed, yours reaching Wardha the day I sent mine from Segaon

I don't think there is anything particular in Saraswati asking leave to stay on for two months. What comment did my letter evoke? And who made it?

You say nothing about your health Where had you been to? I have not understood what Saraswati writes.

Nimu is leaving today to join Ramdas. Kanam[2] will be here. Ba and others have gone to Wardha to see Nimu off She will return tomorrow. She comfortably walks from Wardha to this place and has the courage also to walk back the same day Manu too will come here

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati C W. 7302 Courtesy Kantilal Gandhi

188. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

WARDHA,
July 17, 1936

CHI NARANDAS,

I have corrected the note[3] you sent me and am now returning it with my endorsement. It would be proper not to expect a visit from me at present. If you persist in your request to Sardar, he will, I expect, try to come, though no one

[1] The source has July 26, which apparently is a slip as Nirmala went to join Ramdas on July 16, *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", p 157

[2] Son of Ramdas Gandhi

[3] *Vide* the following item.

can say if that will be on the 12th[1] exactly. I have struck out those names as things are all uncertain. It would of course be admirable if people joined purely out of love of khadi; otherwise what does it matter if we get or do not get a little more khadi? How long can we sustain their enthusiasm for them? However, you may publish the names if in course of time you can ascertain who will be coming.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati •M.M U /II Also C W 8499. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

189. MESSAGE TO KHADI WORKERS

July 17, 1936

Before this[2] was printed a draft was sent to me. I know Narandas's love of khadi so I cannot refuse his request for my signature under it. The more khadi we produce with a pure heart the nearer comes swaraj for all. What Narandas asks of the readers is as good as nothing; it should therefore be complied with without reserve.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M M.U /II. Also C W 8500 Courtesy. Narandas Gandhi

190. TALK WITH JAIRAMDAS DOULATRAM AND DEVDAS GANDHI[3]

[Before *July 18, 1936*][4]

I am very happy that you have come here, but, I hope, not to see this dignified hut of mine. I am responsible for little of the planning here, and I have given to it none of my art or my labour. But I wonder if you saw on your way Mira-

[1] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

[2] It was a note on the programme for Gandhiji's sixty-eighth birthday which was revised by Gandhiji It read "If a spinner wishes to use for himself the yarn spun by him, he will get it back as *prasada*, if not, it will be used to promote khadi activity.

It is not too much to hope that everyone will understand the significance of this occasion and give an impetus to khadi activity "

[3] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[4] Devdas Gandhi had reached Delhi by July 18, *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", p. 157.

behn's hut. It was worth while coming all the way to see her hut certainly. That is really and truly HER hut. This is a hut built FOR me, not MY hut. Here is her own hut, planned and built by herself (of course with other people's labour). But it is not merely a hut. It is a poem. I studied it in detail only yesterday, and I tell you I had tears of joy as I saw the villager's mentality about everything in it. You know I often have my quarrels with her, but let me tell you that no one from amongst us can claim to have the real rural-mindedness that she has. Did you study the position of her little bath-room and the inside of it? She has utilized every stone that the blasting of the underground rock in her well made available to her. The seat for the bath is all one stone fixed to the ground Next to the bathroom in the same little hut is the latrine. No commode or wooden plank or any brickwork Just two beautiful stones, half buried in the ground, and with two halves of kerosene tins between the stones Any villager can do this, but never does it All the water naturally runs to carefully made beds for plants and vegetables. And look at the care with which she has built the little stable for her horse, on the grooming and feeding and keeping of which she lavishes all her love and attention. Her love of animals is a thing to learn from her. Even whilst she is sitting and working in her hut, the stable is so arranged that she can give an occasional look to the horse. And now let us see the inside of the hut—all mud and split bamboo and wattle of palm-branches. You note every little article in the hut and the place given to it. Her *chula* (fire) is all made with her own hands, and though she has learnt it from us no one can beat her in the art. Then see the bamboo mantelpiece (if you will give it that big name) on which she keeps her earthen cooking utensils Then see the little doorless windows and bamboo bookshelf and note the palms and peacocks over the windows, moulded in relief by herself. Also note her little kitchen and the carding room The village where she works is about two to three furlongs from the hut All the women and many of the men in the village know her, and the women confide to her many of their household secrets and look to her for advice and guidance—not always an easy matter, but always unfailingly for solace and comfort. She looks like one of them. Well, if you have not studied her hut carefully I would like you to go there again on your way back.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

1. DR. AMBEDKAR'S INDICTMENT-II

The Vedas, Upanishads, *Smritis* and Puranas including *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* are the Hindu scriptures. Nor is this a finite list. Every age or even generation has added to the list. It follows, therefore, that everything printed or even found handwritten is not scripture. The *Smritis*, for instance, contain much that can never be accepted as the word of God. Thus, many of the texts that Dr. Ambedkar quotes from the *smritis* cannot be accepted as authentic The scriptures properly so called can only be concerned with eternal verities and must appeal to any conscience, i e., any heart whose eyes of understanding are opened. Nothing can be accepted as the word of God which cannot be tested by reason or is capable of being spiritually experienced. And even when you have an expurgated edition of the scriptures, you will need their interpretation. Who is the best interpreter? Not learned men surely. Learning there must be. But religion does not live by it. It lives in the experiences of its saints and seers, in their lives and sayings. When all the most learned commentators of the scriptures are utterly forgotten, the accumulated experience of the sages and saints will abide and be an inspiration for ages to come.

Caste has nothing to do with religion. It is a custom whose origin I do not know and do not need to know for the satisfaction of my spiritual hunger. But I do know that it is harmful both to spiritual and national growth. Varna and ashrama are institutions which have nothing to do with castes. The law of varna teaches us that we have each one of us to earn our bread by following the ancestral calling It defines not our rights but our duties. It necessarily has reference to callings that are conducive to the welfare of humanity and to no other. It also follows that there is no calling too low and none too high. All are good, lawful, and absolutely equal in status. The callings of a Brahmin—spiritual teacher—and a scavenger are equal, and their due performance carries equal merit before God and at one time seems to have carried identical reward before man Both were entitled to their livelihood and no more. Indeed one traces even now in the villages the faint lines of this healthy operation of the law. Living in

Segaon with its population of 600, I do not find a great disparity between the earnings of different tradesmen including Brahmins. I find too that real Brāhmins are to be found even in these degenerate days who are living on alms freely given to them and are giving freely of what they have of spiritual treasures. It would be wrong and improper to judge the law of varna by its caricature in the lives of men who profess to belong to a varna whilst they openly commit a breach of its only operative rule. Arrogation of a superior status by any of the varnas over another is a denial of the law And there is nothing in the law of varna to warrant a belief in untouchability. (The essence of Hinduism is contained in its enunciation of one and only God as Truth and its bold acceptance of ahimsa as the law of the human family.)

I am aware that my interpretation of Hinduism will be disputed by many besides Dr. Ambedkar. That does not affect my position It is an interpretation by which I have lived for nearly half a century and according to which I have endeavoured to the best of my ability to regulate my life.

In my opinion the profound mistake that Dr Ambedkar has made in his address is to pick out the texts of doubtful authenticity and value and the state of degraded Hindus who are no fit specimens of the faith they so woefully misrepresent. Judged by the standard applied by Dr Ambedkar, every known living faith will probably fail.

In his able address, the learned Doctor has over-proved his case. Can a religion that was professed by Chaitanya, Jnanadeva, Tukaram, Tiruvalluvar, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Vivekanand and a host of others who might be easily mentioned, be so utterly devoid of merit as is made out in Dr. Ambedkar's address? A religion has to be judged not by its worst specimens but by the best it might have produced For that and that alone can be used as the standard to aspire to, if not to improve upon.

Harijan, 18-7-1936

192. NOTES

Harijan Sevak Sangh and Municipal Grants

The Secretary of the Harijan Sevak Sangh writes:

> The Government auditors have raised objection to the grant made to the Harijan Sevak Sangh by the Dhulia Municipal Borough during the last year, on the ground that the work of Harijan uplift is not an educational object and the Municipal Borough cannot spend for it. Here is a serious question to be tackled
>
> It is also contended that hostels of students are not educational institutions This is an astounding interpretation and unless set right at an early date will adversely affect the work of the Sangh and other institutions as well

If what is stated here is true, there must be some misunderstanding. It may be debatable whether Harijan uplift can be classed as an educational effort, but when a school is conducted for Harijans or a hostel run in the interests of students surely both are educational efforts, and as such there should be no objection to a municipal borough financing such institutions. I hope, therefore, that the remarks said to have been made by the Government auditors are due to a pure misunderstanding of the position It may be that the Dhulia Board voted a grant for 'Harijan Uplift' and if it has no power to make grants except to educational institutions, Harijan uplift as such might not classified under grants to education. The matter requires further elucidation. Any further comment must be withheld till all the facts of the case are known.

A Villager's Humanity

The reader will be glad to see the following two pictures sent by Miss Mary Barr of Khedi of what I have called "A Villager's Humanity"

> 1. Yesterday I found an old woman sitting in the wet with her calf I asked her why she did not sit in the verandah (meaning the verandah of Miss Mary Barr's cottage) with the rest of her party and keep dry (They were some wandering people who had asked leave to camp for 24 hours on the verandah) She replied, 'I am sitting by this बच्चा (calf) Its mother is dead '

2 This afternoon I found two donkeys had come on to the verandah out of the rain and my first instinct was to 'shoo' them off as they would spoil the floor. They obediently 'shooed' and I immediately felt ashamed remembering yesterday's old woman and invited them back. They came!

I am sure Tara would be glad to know that HER verandah is sheltering all kinds of men and beasts during these wet days

The reference to Tara, i.e., the late Mary Chesley, entirely bears out what I knew of her, and now that her numerous intimate friends have come to know about her premature and unexpected death, I have been receiving touching letters about the qualities of her heart and head. From those I copy the following.[1]

Polly (Miss Chesley) was built of the stuff from which martyrs are made She never knew fear She was a keen pacifist and persuaded me to take the post left vacant at her mother's death as Superintendent of Peace and Arbitration in the W C T.U for Canada . . . Polly and I worked together to gather money for the Russian and Chinese famines, getting ten thousand dollars We also collected one thousand dollars for German children's relief

A Correction

With reference to my note 'Barbarous If True'[2] the President of the Panchayat Board, Devakottai writes.[3]

. . There has been no objection raised at all at any time by myself or any other member of the Board to the Harijan member taking his seat alongside the other members On the other hand he has been repeatedly requested during each and every meeting to take his seat. He has complied with our request during a few of the meetings that were held during the last four months

The Harijan member was questioned about the alleged treatment and he has issued a statement . that he was never objected to by anybody in the Board in taking his seat, and at times when he hesitated to take his seat along with others as per age-long custom, he has been promptly cheered up by the President to take his seat and advised not to get disheartened

. . Finally I wish to inform you that the Harijan member is no doubt sitting along with other members during the whole of the

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* pp. 103-4

[3] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

meeting now, and I want to assure you that all facilities are accorded to him by me so that his rights and privileges are duly enjoyed by him

I gladly publish this letter. I am gladder still to find that the statement published was wholly untrue In these days of suspicion and ferment among Harijans, it is necessary for correspondents to be accurate about the information they give. It is worth while knowing how the correspondent came to make the statement which appears to have been without any foundation whatsoever.

Harijan, 18-7-1936

193. *LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 18, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I got your letter. For some time past I have not been able to attend to your letters regularly.

There is nothing special concerning Harilal for the present. He goes about talking at random.

Sushila seems to think that I am insisting on your coming over here, but I don't remember having suggested such a thing in any of my letters. I do not think that you need come over if you are comfortably settled there. I would of course wish you not to feel helpless. Do what you both think right.

Ba, Manu and Kano came over to stay with me yesterday. Lilavati is here already. I may say we are now cramped for space.

I think I have told you earlier that there is just one room.

Ramdas has set himself up very well for the present Let us now see how he fares. Nimu went to join him two days ago.

Devdas and Lakshmi had been here and have now reached Delhi. Chhaganlal and Kashi continue to stay at Wardha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N. 4854

194. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
July 19, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

You need not attempt to come here for the statement. There is no hurry. I cannot even give time, today being *Harijan* editing day. And of course you were right in postponing the statement to the plants which in village life take the prior place.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W 6356 Courtesy: Mirabehn Also G N 9822

195. TALK WITH STUDENTS OF VILLAGE WORKERS' TRAINING SCHOOL[1]

[*July 19, 1936*][2]

He[3] does not talk like me; he simply sings *bhajans* and preaches and teaches through them. I must needs talk as I can neither compose nor sing:

After the entertainment . . . the talk began with a light banter of a student who believes in growing long hair Gandhiji asked him:

Is this just for show, or for the sake of health? If it is for no particular purpose, why not get rid of it?

Well, don't you run away with the idea that one can do village work by just going and sitting down in a village. To be a real villager is to serve them, and you may remember that to be a real villager is more difficult than to obtain a graduate's degree. I have been talking of villages and villagers for the past thirty years, but have been able to come to stay in a village only today. And that too is just the stay and no

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", 25-7-1936

[2] According to Mahadev Desai the conversation took place on a Sunday The Sunday prior to July 25 fell on July 19

[3] Tukdoji Maharaj

work. We eat unpolished rice and hand-ground flour, but how can we compel the villagers to do likewise? Even if we had the power to do so, we should not exercise it We have to convince them by patient persuasion.

Q Without power, can we really achieve much?

A. Did I not say that even if we had it, we should not use it? We have to convert them to our way of thinking. We have to bring to bear on them moral pressure.

Q If you take such a desperate view, where are we?

A. I am far from taking a desperate view and it would be wrong to suppose that potentially you are weaker than I. Physically of course there may be considerable difference between you and me, and the spiritual power in you may be dormant in your case, active in my case. But this is no task where one could do things as if by magic. What magic is there in merely staying in a village? Even six months' stay in a village may not by itself achieve anything. Much depends on the spirit in which one goes to stay there. We stay for years in cities without affecting the life around us. We have to go there as their voluntary servants. They come and labour for us in cities for a wage. We have to go to villages and labour for them without a wage.

Q I see Do the village folk come to see you?

A. They do, but not without fear, and perhaps even suspicion. These also are among the many shortcomings of villagers. We have to rid them of these.

Q How?

A. By gently insinuating ourselves into their affections. We must disabuse them of the fear that we have gone there to coerce them, we must show them by our behaviour that there is no intention to coerce, nor any selfish motive But this is all patient work. You cannot quickly convince them of your *bona fides*.

Q. Don't you think that only those who work without any remuneration or allowance can inspire confidence in them, i e, those who accept nothing whether from any association or from the village?

A. No. They do not even know who is and who is not working for remuneration. What does impress them is the way in which we live, our habits, our talks, even our gestures. There may be a few who suspect us of a desire to earn; we have to

dispel their suspicion no doubt. And then do not run away with the feeling that he who accepts nothing from an association or from the villages is by any means an ideal servant. He is often a prey to self-righteousness which debases one.

Q. You teach us village crafts Is that to give us a means of earning our livelihood or to enable us to teach the villagers? If it is for the latter object, how can we master a craft in the course of a year?

A. You are being taught the ordinary crafts, because unless you know the principles you will not be able to help people with suggestions. The most enterprising among you would certainly earn a living by following a craft. Now here you see I had a hut ready made for me, thanks to Jamnalalji and thanks to my 'Mahatmaship'! But you will have to build your own hut, unless of course you also get a friend to build it for you—in which case I will say you were old and decrepit like me!

Q. Shri Rajagopalachariar who was here the other day told us that it was no use our going to villages without mastering a craft, for then we should not be able to teach them anything You must be better agriculturists than they are, he said, better cobblers, better weavers, and so on

A. What he said is true. But we have no agricultural course here, because mastery of agriculture would take a century. And the things we teach here are such that you are likely to be able to bring to the villagers better knowledge of them We have improved grinding stones and rice-husking stones and oil-presses. We are carrying on experiments in improving our tools and we have to take the improvements to them Above all there is truth and honesty in business that we have to teach them. They adulterate milk, they adulterate oil, they will adulterate truth for petty gain. It is not their fault, it is ours. We have so long ignored them and only exploited them, never taught them anything better. By close contact with them we can easily correct their ways. Long neglect and isolation has dulled their intellect and even moral sense. We have to brighten them up and revive them all along the line.

Q. What about the Harijan problem here?

A. It is as acute as anywhere else.

Q. There is untouchability as amongst the Harijans?

A. Of course. A Mahar would keep a Bhangi at arm's length. Here is a well belonging to Jamnalalji, no public well.

After consultation with the man in charge of the estate, we decided to declare it open to all the Harijans and invited Mahars, Chamars, Bhangis and others to use it. They would not do it They hesitated. One or two Mahars then came forward, a Bhangi also came. That created an uproar. The Harijans stopped using the well, and the tumult has ceased. But there it is. It is like an armed truce. But it is no use blaming them. What are we doing? I have heard with horror the incident from Rajputana where Harijans would not be suffered to cook their food in ghee and to prepare sweetmeats, and that, because of the perversity of the *savarnas*, the situation reached such a pass that firing had to be resorted to and three *savarnas* were killed. It is a tremendous problem. Now, can we who have not cast out untouchability expect the Harijans to cast it out from their midst in a moment?

Harijan, 25-7-1936

196 LETTER TO MIRABEHN

July 20, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

No one understands what message the bearer has brought. Lilavati is too careless to understand. I cannot speak. Munnalal is half dead. B threatens to follow suit. In these circumstances, it is better to write out what you want. This has become a confused household instead of a hermitage it was expected to be. Such has been my fate!! I must find my hermitage from within.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6357. Courtesy: Mirabehn Also G.N. 9823

197. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

WARDHA,
July 20, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

I have your letter. Even if somebody offers a big donation, do not spend money received from outside on the sanitation work. I have forbidden the spending of even a single rupee in the village here where sanitation work is being carried on, for then people miss the education. We should work as hard as we can but must not spend money Let the work remain incomplete till the people themselves are prepared to pay for it. We may ourselves do the sweeping, remove the night-soil and bury it. But until the people put up latrines with their own money, let them relieve themselves in the open. We may instruct people in the ways but they must themselves find the means. The Taluka Board may find the money. It may not cost more than ten or twenty rupees. If you do not follow all this, ask me again.

Have no doubt that sanitation work and educating the people with regard to a healthy diet is the only real medical service. Why should not Shamalbhai, Shivabhai and the other men staying there join the sanitation work? It will be enough to devote one hour daily. You should set out every morning like the Bhangis with brooms, spades and baskets.

You may ask me anything you wish to.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro-6 G. S Gangabehnne, p 93 Also C W. 8835 Courtesy Gangabehn Vaidya

198. LETTER TO BABURAO D. MHATRE

SEGAON,
July 21, 1936

DEAR MHATRE,

Shoorjibhai[1] sends the message that the absence of mention of your name in *Harijan*[2] has been felt by you. I assure you that it is not intentional. As you know I am sparing in my compliments. I should have mentioned you when Shri Kar was mentioned. Only at that time I had not your name before me. I know your valuable services too well to underrate them. But I am not going to make an opportunity for mention. It will come in the natural course.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy C W 9824. Courtesy B. D. Mhatre

199. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

July 21, 1936

BHAI TYAGI,

I cannot read the whole of your letter. It is sad news that Balvir[3] has contracted tuberculosis. How is he now?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi· G N 6097

[1] Shoorji Vallabhdas

[2] Presumably this is a reference to Gandhiji's speech published in *Harijan*, 4-4-1936, *vide* Vol LXII, "Speech at Khadi And Village Industries Exhibition, Lucknow", pp 297-300

[3] Addressee's son

200. LETTER TO RAJKISHORI

July 21, 1936

CHI. RAJKISHORI,

Your letter. Stay wherever you find peace.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 6638. Also C.W. 4286 Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

201. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 21, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I hope you have received my letter. I am enclosing letters to Tyagi[1] and Raj[2] and also one[3] to the students.

Return the letter to Rammehar[4] noting on it all the facts. Ask Malkaniji[5] why he had to be relieved.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 341

202. ARE WE RIVALS?

[On or before *July 22, 1936*][6]

I have had two typical cuttings sent to me giving altogether false news about relations between Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and myself. Remarks said to have been made by me have been reproduced in quotation marks. Thus I am reported to have said, "My life-work is ruined" (i.e., by Jawaharlal's programme);

[1]&[2] *Vide* the preceding two items

[3] This is not traceable.

[4] Inmate of the Harijan Ashram, Delhi

[5] N. R. Malkani

[6] The report in *The Hindustan Times* carrying this item is dated July 22, 1936

"not even the firmness and repression of the British Government have harmed my work as much as the policy outlined by Nehru."[1]

I have never said anything of the kind nor uttered one single remark attributed to me in the two articles sent to me. What is more, I have not even entertained the opinions contained in them. So far as I am aware, Jawaharlal has come to the conclusion that India's freedom cannot be gained by violent means and that it can be gained by non-violent means. And I know for a fact that he did not in Lucknow "come out for the use of violence in the struggle for Independence".[2]

No doubt there are differences of opinion between us. They were clearly set forth in the letters we exchanged some years ago, and in reply to correspondents I hope at an early date to bring our differences up to date. But they do not affect our personal relations in any way whatsoever. We remain the same adherents to the Congress goal that we have ever been. My life-work is not, cannot be, ruined by Jawaharlal's programme, nor have I ever believed for that matter that it has been harmed even by "the firmness and repression of the British Government". My philosophy, if I can be said to have any, excludes the possibility of harm to one's cause by outside agencies. The harm comes deservedly and only when the cause itself is bad, or being good its champions are untrue, faint-hearted, or unclean. The article in question refers to "Gandhiji's secret plans".[3] If I know Gandhi at all I can vouchsafe for it that he never had any secret plans in his life. And if beyond what the readers of *Harijan* know there is no plan that I can disclose, it is because I know none myself. Then one of the articles presents Jawaharlal and me as rivals. I cannot think of myself as a rival to Jawaharlal or him to me. Or if we are, we are rivals in making love to each other in the pursuit of the common goal, and if in the joint work for reaching the goal we at times seem to be taking different routes, I hope the world will find that we had lost sight of each other only for the moment and only to meet again with greater mutual attraction and affection.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

[1] This was reported in the *Literary Digest*.

[2] This was reported by *Unity*, *vide* footnote 2, p 126.

[3] The *Literary Digest* had reported "As anxious as India's 350,000,000 people to prove Gandhi's secret plans is the Marquess of Linlithgow, Facing a turbulent Nationalist Party, Linlithgow next year will institute India's new British-made Constitution, which provides for a Parliamentary Government

203. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 22, 1936

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ,

Many thanks for your prompt attention to my letter[1]. Do please send the *mistry* as soon as he can come. I may mention that we have no *tools* save nine-casts, one simple sewing machine and a village awl. Whatever tools may be needed should be brought by the *mistry*. If they are within our means we shall buy them If they are not they may go back with him when the time for return arrives. Rs. 60 per month will be paid from the day he reaches Wardha or, if you prefer, from the day he leaves Agra. Will you please also let me know what will be expected of us for his accommodation? The tannery is situated in the open about 1½ miles from the post-office. We can place at his disposal two rooms in the tannery.

I appreciate your kind wish that I should revisit Dayal Bagh if it be only to see your new dairy. I should love to do so. But my present *sadhana* lies in not leaving Segaon I want to feel my feet in this little village and be constantly in it for 3 seasons. I know that there will be at least 3 breaks during the time. I do not want to add to the list. But I can say this that I need no inducement to go to Dayal Bagh.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat. G N 2164

by a series of compromises in favour of India's minorities, mostly the sixty million Moslems To placate Moslems, who fear Hindu dominance, the Constitution grants them almost as many seats in the Federal Legislature, which will exercise no control in India's foreign and defence affairs Knowing that neither Gandhi nor Nehru's Nationalists cherish the new Constitution, Lord Linlithgow is watchful of the two rivals' next move."

[1] *Vide* p. 137-8.

204. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

July 22, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You are not to venture out tonight. Come as early as you can tomorrow morning but without disturbing your rest. And on your way look in at Mira's cottage

Love.

BAPU

From the original C.W. 3734 Courtesy: Amrit Kaur Also G.N. 6890

205. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

July 22, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have your postcard written on your birthday. You did right in taking my blessings for granted. In order to be a Mahatma's disciple you will have to imagine one yourself. The person who is called Mahatma is not one at all, though he is certainly able to take the place of father to many and is content with that. He would be fully satisfied if most of them testified to his being a good father.[1]

I hope your work is going on well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

With me at present are Ba, Manu, Lilavati, Balwantsinha and Munnalal.

Tukde Buva also is staying with me these days.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10383. Also C.W. 6821. Courtesy Premabehn Kantak

[1] The addressee insisted on calling Gandhiji 'Mahatmaji' unlike others who called him 'Bapuji', arguing that she would not call anyone else father as long as her own father was living and that a name ought to denote only one person.

206. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

July 22, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

After all Bhaskarrao[1] did not come up to the mark. Nothing can add to my grief. What does it matter to the ocean if the number of rivers emptying themselves into it is one more or one less? But then don't we sing in our daily prayers that misery is not really misery and happiness is not really happiness? A mountain of misery will confront us when we forget Narayana.

Bhaskarrao is a man who does not subscribe to this view. I have also informed Vinoba today.

I have understood what you write about Ramji.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S N 9097

207. LETTER TO VIJAYABEHN GANDHI

July 22, 1936

CHI. VIJAYA[2],

I have your little note. You do not write with an open heart still. I am glad that Jamna[3] has asked for a copy of the *Gita* with the Sanskrit text and printed in large type for your use. I have asked for one and shall send it to you both

The third chapter of the *Gita* which you have learnt is very useful to us. Its effect is true to its heading[4]. It interprets (in the highest sense) *yajna* as body labour. However, I have described fetching water, grinding corn, sweeping and the

[1] Bhaskarrao Behere
[2] Wife of Purushottam Gandhi
[3] Wife of Narandas Gandhi
[4] Viz , "The Yoga of Karma"

processes connected with spinning as the *panchamahayajnas*[1]. How many of them do you perform?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M.M U /II

208 CABLE TO KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ

July 23, 1936

KAMALNAYAN BAJAJ
INDIAN CONTINGENT
OLYMPIC VILLAGE
BERLIN

ENGAGEMENT[2] MADE ANNOUNCED GOD BE WITH YOU. LOVE.

BAPU

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p 290

209 TELEGRAM TO LAXMANPRASAD PODDAR

July 23, 1936

SETH LAXMANPRASADJI PODDAR
2 HASTINGS PARK ROAD
ALIPORE, CALCUTTA

BOTH KAMALNAYAN AND SAVITRI HAVE MY BLESSINGS. MAY THIS CONNECTION BE FRUITFUL OF GOOD FOR THEM AND FOR COUNTRY.

GANDHI

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p 267

[1] The five great sacrifices traditionally enjoined on the householder are *svadhyaya, homa, balivaishvadeva, pindakriya, atithipujan*

[2] Of the addressee with Savitri, daughter of Laxmanprasad Poddar, *vide* the following item

210. NOTE TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

[After *July 23, 1936*][1]

1. The marriage should not be solemnized in less than four years or before Kamalnayan completes his studies.

2. Whatever education Savitri wants to have, she should have only in India After they are married the two of them may travel for sight-seeing or for work

3 Kamalnayan and Savitri should have full freedom to correspond with each other. I do not see why such correspondence need be secret.

4. Even before marriage, Savitri should from time to time visit Wardha or any other place where Janakibehn, etc., may be staying.

From a photostat of the Gujarati· G N. 3054

211. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 24, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter. How can I relieve your depression? You are so sensitive that one never knows when you might take offence First, this is in your nature and secondly, you are at present unhappy. You cannot forget Harilal, so you are unhappy over everything that you either do not find pleasant or do not understand. In this, God alone can help you and He will. May those *bhajans* which you sing with such relish be your shield, since they are the balm to soothe all your burning.

I cannot at all see why Ramachandran and Paparamma are angry Explain it to me if you have understood it.

We shall discuss the question of Harilal when you return I understand from Ramdas's letter that Harilal is perpetually in a drunken stupor. When Ramdas spoke to him about the unrestrained language of his Rander speech, his reply was that it was their way of propaganda. You have been sent a copy of the speech of course.

[1] *Vide* "Cable to Kamalnayan Bajaj", p. 169.

I destroyed Paparamma's letter. It contained nothing special about you. On the contrary, from beginning to end it was full of praise for you. You are a sadhu, you are clever, Saraswati got you on account of great *punya*[1], and so on. So I wrote: "May your hopes be fulfilled!"

You certainly ought not to extend your stay beyond a month notwithstanding their importunity. You may obtain Kakasaheb's permission and stay on if you are very keen but it does not look well to ask for such permission unless the need is very great. You should yourself consider if it is necessary

I have not understood the telegram from Devdas You don't have to think of it.

Build up your health well while you are there.

I am enclosing a letter for Saraswati.[2]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati C.W 7301 Courtesy Kantilal Gandhi

212. *LETTER TO SARASWATI*

SEGAON,
[*July 24, 1936*][3]

CHI. SARASWATI,

I did get a letter from you at long last. Keep it up.

You are not like what? Did you not say that you wished to marry the same day if it were possible? What is wrong with it? Yours was a childlike wish. I fail to understand Mama's and Mother's anger.

What a smart girl you are! I let Kanti go for a month and now you ask him to stay for two. Don't do it Do not detain Kanti beyond one month.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G N 6153 Also C W 3426 Courtesy. Kantilal Gandhi

[1] Spiritual merit
[2] *Vide* the following item.
[3] *Vide* the preceding item.

213. AVOIDABLE MISERY

From a correspondent's long letter of wail I take the following[1].

This letter is one out of many such. The majority of letters are written in Hindi. But we know that English education has made things no better for parents of daughters. In some cases they have become worse in that the market price of possible young men who would suit an English-educated daughter of an English-educated father suffers an appreciable increase.

In a case like the Bengali father's the best help that can be rendered is not a loan or a gift of the required sum, but it should consist in persuading and strengthening the parent to refuse to purchase a match for his daughter but choose or let the daughter choose one who would marry her for love, not for money This means a voluntary extension of the field of choice. There must be a breach in the double wall of caste and province. If India is one and indivisible, surely there should be no artificial divisions creating innumerable little groups which would neither inter-dine nor intermarry. There is no religion in this cruel custom. It would not do to plead that individuals cannot make the commencement and that they must wait till the whole society is ripe for the change. No reform has ever been brought about except through intrepid individuals breaking down inhuman customs or usages And after all what hardships can the schoolmaster suffer if he and his daughters refused to treat marriage as a marketable transaction instead of a status or a sacrament which it undoubtedly is. I would, therefore, advise my correspondent courageously to give up the idea of borrowing or begging and to save the four hundred rupees he can get on his life policy by choosing in consultation with his daughter a suitable husband no matter to what caste or province he belongs.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

[1] Not reproduced here The correspondent, a father of seven daughters, had dwelt on his straitened circumstances and sought Gandhiji's help in meeting the expenses of one of his daughter's marriage

214. IN WATERLESS SALEM

The Secretary, Salem District Harijan Sevak Sangh, writes:

> The District is dry and the Harijans are not allowed to take water from the wells owned by caste Hindus The Gandhi Ashram has provided wells in two or three villages. In the village of Avangier the Harijans are now depending on the visit of the railway engine to the railway station for their drinking water supply The engine driver doles out some water and the villagers have to be content with that There is another place called Managalapuram where water scarcity is severe.

This reveals a shocking state of affairs. No private organization can ever cope with this terrible distress. As it is, Salem District has a perpetual scarcity of water. And when to this is added scarcity of common fellow-feeling on the part of a large part of its inhabitants, the distress becomes unbearable as it has become in the case of Harijans in Salem District. Is it not the first duty of the District Board to ensure a regular supply of water for the Harijans—the most neglected and yet the most useful servants of society? And now that the Government of Madras has a department dealing with difficulties of such classes as Harijans, one may hope to hear less and less of scarcity of pure water for Harijans. But this is not to mean that Harijan *sevaks* are to relax their vigilance or that private charity need not concern itself with water supply to Harijans. Aid must reach Harijans in the shape of water no matter from what source it comes. And it will come only when all sources combine to cope effectively with the distress.

Harijan, 25-7-1936

215. LETTER TO M. C. RAJAH

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 26, 1936

DEAR RAO BAHADUR,

I have no difficulty about giving general endorsement to your letter to Dr. Moonje.[1] I do not at all understand Dr. Moonje's or Dr Ambedkar's position.[2] For me removal of untouchability stands on a footing all its own It is to me a deeply religious question. The very existence of our religion depends on its voluntary removal by *savarna* Hindus in the spirit of repentance It can never be a question of barter for me. And I am glad you take nearly the same position[3] that I do

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy. C W 7787 Courtesy· G D Birla

[1&2] Dr B S Moonje's proposal, accepted by Dr Ambedkar, was as follows· "If Dr. Ambedkar were to announce his decision that he and his followers are prepared to embrace Sikhism in preference to Islam and Christianity, and that he shall honestly and sincerely cooperate with the Hindus and the Sikhs in propagating their culture and in counteracting the Moslem movement for drawing the Depressed Classes into the Moslem fold, the Hindu Mahasabha will be prepared, in view of their having agreed to remain within the Hindu culture, to make an announcement that it will not object

(i) To the conversion of the Depressed Classes to Sikhism

(ii) To the inclusion of the neo-Sikhs in the list of the Scheduled Castes; and

(iii) To the enjoyment by the Depressed Classes of the political rights of the Poona Pact by free competition between the non-Sikh and the neo-Sikh Depressed Classes as provided for under the Poona Pact" For Gandhiji's views, *vide* "Letter to B S Moonje", pp 185-6

[3] In his letter the addressee had challenged the position of Moonje pointing out that there was a difference between religious conversion and communal migration such as he was advocating and declared that he could not be a party to the political manipulation proposed by Moonje.

216. LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

July 26, 1936

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

Today I must write to you. I very much wished to write to you all these days, but could get no time at all.

Enclosed is a letter from the Bhangis of Bhavnagar. I have written to them and advised them that they should seek and follow the advice of the local branch of the Sangh I am sending the letter[1] only for your information. Read it and take whatever action, if any, may be necessary.

I often think about what you wrote in your personal letter. These are troubled times and it is difficult to keep one's moorings at such a time Be sure about this. that reason without moral sense is like a prostitute who may be outwardly attractive, may dance and sing and cast a spell on one, but who will ruin a man. I see the prostitute-reason doing that to many people at the present time.

See that you yourself do not abandon even the smallest of the Ashram rules.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 5539

217. LETTER TO TARA N. MASHRUWALA

July 26, 1936

CHI. TARA,

I wanted to reply to your letter immediately and with a long letter, but it could not be. Now, however, I must reply. Do continue Dr. Gauri's treatment

You must write to me regularly.

You should try to stay at Mahila Ashram, if you are not certain that it is your duty to stay at Akola. There, you may, if you wish, increase your knowledge of English Besides, you will be able to see me from time to time if you are in the Mahila

[1] Not available

Ashram. Kishorelal and Gomati are also there, and Jamnalalji, too, will generally be there.

I have lent you a helping hand but it remains to be seen how long you will let me help. I shall not tire of it, nor should you. I want to lead you just as far as your mind and your heart can take you. You are therefore safe with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N 7527 Also C.W 5003 Courtesy. Kanubhai N Mashruwala

218. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

SEGAON,
July 27, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I had prepared myself for the news, especially when I found that you had not come. Will you have Manu or Lilavati? You will tell me when I come in the evening. Whether germ or chill, let us hope you will be free tomorrow. I shan't negotiate the hillock tomorrow but walk straight to you. I wish you will take an earth bandage for the head. The ache will go. Take soda with hot or cold water. More when I come.

Love.

BAPU

From the original· C.W 6360. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G N 9826

219. LETTER TO UTTAMCHAND

July 28, 1936

What are you referring to when you say that there has been silence observed at this end about your drops as you call your donations? I assure [you] in the forlorn causes I handle, every drop is an ocean. Your latest cheque is most welcome.

I appreciated your caution about Kamala Memorial. There are trustees behind it who will control it. I am hoping that it will be a home for ailing women and children.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

220. *LETTER TO MANDY MACCARTHY*

July 28, 1936

I have received your articles with much interest But before I publish them in *Harijan*, I would like to know much more about you than you have said in your postcard. What is your occupation, what is your age, what led you to India, what led you to adopt an Indian name[1], what is your faith, how do you support yourself ? I hope you will not consider these questions to be impertinent. Generally we take in *Harijan* articles from those whom we know and who try to live up to what they write. I have observed over the past 50 years that the simplest writings of earnest persons are effective when brilliant writings of mere clever people fall flat. Words seem to take the vitality of their writers or speakers.

And if I am to use your articles, I should have your full permission to cut them about always taking care not to change the sense.

Yours,

M. K. G.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy. Narayan Desai

221. *LETTER TO EFY ARISTARCHI*

July 28, 1936

It is ages since I wrote to you. So you have lost your uncle. For seekers of God every loss is a gain. Separation is purely nominal and temporary. Death is a deliverance for all without exception. But you need no sermon from me. Since I wanted to write on your uncle's death, I could only give you my innermost thoughts long held on death.

I dare not give myself the time to write to you about things going on in this little village.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy: Narayan Desai

[1] Tandradevi

222. LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL

SEGAON,
July 28, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

You have been suffering much indeed. You must have got yourself operated upon by now.[1]

The revelation about . . .[2] is a serious one. But such corruption is not to be found in the States People's [Conference] only. It is a widespread evil. There are a great many people like . . .[3] among us. . . .'s[4] sin has been discovered. Let us see what he does now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Take complete rest. It will not matter if you cannot come here. I am in excellent health.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–2. Sardar Vallabhbhaine, p. 196

223. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

July 28, 1936

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYAN,

I am happy to see the signatures of you both[5]. My hip-baths still continue. There is no need of steam-baths as I perspire enough as it is. I am not using the mud-pack at night. I am not used to a sitz-bath. I shall now see about it.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N 5625

[1] The addressee was operated upon for septum of the nose at a polyclinic on July 30, 1936

[2,3&4] Omissions as in the source

[5] Presumably the addressee and a hakim who practised nature-cure

224 LETTER TO SATIS CHANDRA DAS GUPTA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 29, 1936

BHAI SATIS BABU,

There is little likelihood of Chandranath following your advice if he does not wholly believe in truth and non-violence.

Why does Hemprabha keep worrying?

How are matters with the Harijan Sevak Sangh? And how is Arun[1]?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G.N. 1627

225. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 30, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

How I wish you would put down your foot on 'insane' programmes and save your energy for the common good.

All will be well if you will never lose your humour and make up your mind to stay out your period, trying to push through your policy as much as you can through the present team Time has arrived to think of the future, i.e, next year's plans. Whatever happens, you must not be in opposition. That is my confirmed opinion. When like Father you feel that you are ready to take sole charge of the Congress, I think that from the present company you will find no opposition. I hope you will have plain sailing in Bombay[2]

Kamala Memorial is disturbing me. I do not know what is happening about the collections or the scheme. If Khurshed or Sarup[3] or both are concentrating on the thing, it is well. Please tell Sarup I expect her to keep me informed of her doings in this connection.

[1] Addressee's youngest son

[2] At the A. I. C C. meeting scheduled to be held on August 22 and 23

[3] Vijayalakhmi Pandit

I won't discuss here the question of socialism. As soon as I finish revision of my note, you will have the draft before it goes to the Press. My difficulty is not about the remote future. It is always the present that I can concentrate upon and that at times worries me. If the present is well taken care of, the future will take care of itself. But I must not anticipate.

I hope you are keeping really well.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You will see the correspondence between Jenkins and myself. I too hate legal proceedings. But this seems to me to be a case where action is called for.

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

226. DRAFT OF APPEAL FOR FUNDS[1]

[*July 30, 1936*][2]

An appeal is respectfully made for at least Rs. . . . on behalf of the Harijan Sevak Sangh. Gandhiji cannot be expected to tour as he did in 1933-34 for collections and stirring public conscience. There is no cause other than the Harijan cause that can claim greater support from caste Hindus who believe that untouchability is a blot on Hinduism. The only question therefore for the public to consider is whether the Harijan Sevak Sangh is the organization that is enough to discharge the trust it has undertaken.

The Appendix gives enough details to enable the public to judge this for themselves. And if they are satisfied about the fitness of the institution, we hope that a generous response will be made to this appeal.

From a photostat : G N 10503. Also C W. 7976 b. Courtesy: G. D. Birla

[1]&[2] This was drafted by Gandhiji; *vide* "Letter to S. R. Venkataraman", p 181.

227. ENDORSEMENT OF APPEAL FOR FUNDS

July 30, 1936

I heartily endorse this appeal[1]. Removal of untouchability is a matter of change of heart. Hearts are not changed by expenditure of money however wise it may be. The change will come when we have enough selfless spiritually-minded workers. Monetary contributions will be an effective test of the existence of such persons. For one of the results of the change of heart should be incessant work among Harijans. This cannot be done without plenty of funds. Schools and hostels cannot be opened nor can wells be dug without ample funds. I hope therefore that this appeal will receive liberal support from both the rich and the poor according to their means.

M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N 10503. Also C.W. 7976 a. Courtesy G D Birla

228. LETTER TO S. R. VENKATARAMAN

July 30, 1936

DEAR VENKATARAMAN,

In accordance with Shri Birla's wish, I have drafted the appeal[2] for funds. I enclose also my endorsement.[3] I have not the time to make a fair copy for facsimile reproduction. If Shri Birla's conception is different from mine, the draft should be altered as he wishes I am of opinion that the appeal should not be issued unless some support is guaranteed and arrangements made for collections throughout India.

Yours truly,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat G N 10503 Also C W. 7976 Courtesy: G. D Birla

[1] *Vide* the preceding item.
[2]&[3] *Vide* the preceding two items

229. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

July 30, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER AMTUL SALAAM[1],

I have with me two of your letters to answer. There is no harm in your being operated upon there. I shall do through Devdas whatever is possible. Moreover, there will be Brajkisan when he comes. Give the accompanying letter[2] to Devdas.

I have understood your point about Rukmini. And now she has after all gone. It was just the proper thing that Malkani should have gone to leave her at Hyderabad

I shall ask you to come after your operation. Meanwhile look after your health carefully. Do send for anything that you need You should freely ask Devdas for anything that you need if you truly regard him as your brother.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 342

230. LETTER TO ANANDSHANKAR B. DHRUVA

July 30, 1936[3]

SUJNA BHAISHRI (PROF. DHRUVA)[4],

I have carefully gone through both your letters to Mahadev. What I want is not something for the learned but something which Harijans and workers can understand and put into practice. I do not want you to make a fresh study, but only that from your wide knowledge you should send me something which you can write in . . .[5] hours or at the most in eight hours.

I had already written to you that I liked your book on Hindu religion very much. I will certainly read it again. But

[1] This is in Urdu
[2] Not traceable
[3] The source has Ahmedabad in the date-line which is obviously a slip
[4] 1869-1942, Sanskrit scholar and Gujarati man of letters
[5] The source is illegible here.

I do not want extracts from anything. For a moment imagine yourself among Harijans in a village, converse with the old men, women and children and teach them religion. I want whatever is available in this way and it should have your stamp. Mahadev won't even translate it into English. The testimonial you give him is deserved, but first he hasn't the time and then I want your language It is not beyond you to write simple English and finally you will grant the two of us the right to make some suggestions. Won't you? The suggestions will be put into the writing only if you approve of them.

Now about your programme. Going through it I am scared. At the moment Gujarat or Hindu religion does not require scholarship. That will not save either religion or India or Gujarat. I do not mean to say that there is absolutely no need for scholarship There are many who will give us scholarly writings. But there are very few religious enthusiasts who would make themselves one with the people I have believed that you are one of them. You have given quite a big share of your scholarship to the scholars and the educated. But what have you given to the villagers and persons like me? A person like me would steal something from what you have given to the educated. But that does not amount to giving. Do what Tolstoy did. In his old age he had before his eyes the unknown peasants of Russia and the literature he produced for them will live for ever. Can't I expect something like that from you?

Be that as it may. I have said whatever I wanted to. I did not want to write so much. Accept whatever appeals to you and throw away the rest. I won't feel unhappy. Why should a beggar feel shy? Donors will only give according to their wishes and means.

Vandematarams from
MOHANDAS

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

231. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

July 30, 1936

CHI. KANU,

I am sending six letters with this. Keep copies of the letters[1] to Jugalkishore and Gangabehn. The rest may be posted straight away. Make a copy of the letter[2] to Satyanand Bose also.

In this way you are getting closer to Mahadev's place.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M M.U./II

232. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

July 30, 1936[3]

CHI. JAYANTI[4],

I had always sought and got news about you. I am glad that you wrote to me. I do not have to say anything about the change in your views. May you go on making progress in your thinking and do fearlessly whatever you feel is right. Your good lies in that.

As you were bound by pledge it was your duty before violating it to meet the leader of your batch and acquaint him with your dilemma. You have not done that. A soldier's duty is not easy. If all the eighty soldiers interpret the pledge as they like, what will the leader do? Can the country's work be done like that? But the milk that has been spilt cannot be collected again. This is to be remembered for the future.

I know ill-feeling prevails in Gujarat. It is difficult to say who is to blame for it. But I have seen that socialists in Gujarat do not discriminate between truth and untruth. There are some among them of whom I would not have believed it. I do feel unhappy about it. I do hope that you have not accepted diplomacy as your dharma.

[1]&[2] These are not traceable.

[3] The source has Ahmedabad in the date-line which is obviously a slip

[4] An Ashram inmate who later became a communist

You had been to see me. I was happy to know that both of you brothers are doing very well financially.

From a copy of the Gujarati Pyarelal Papers Courtesy. Pyarelal

233 LETTER TO H L. SHARMA

July 30, 1936

BHAI SHARMA,

We are looking for Babbitt[1] but it has not been found so far. How much was the yarn[2]? The corresponding length of khadi of the same count will be sent. I am looking for the fine yarn, it simply slipped from my mind. You know my attitude to going to the villages. Do not incur heavy expenditure. Draupadi and the child are well, I hope. Do keep writing to me

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p 258

234 LETTER TO B. S. MOONJE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 31, 1936

DEAR DR. MOONJE,

R. B. M. C Rajah has sent Seth Birla and me copies of your correspondence with him on the Yeravda Pact[3] for such use as we may wish to make. But the correspondence on your side is marked confidential My own opinion is that the subject-matter admits no confidence. But before I can avail myself of the Rao Bahadur's permission, I would like to have your consent to the publication of the correspondence. Meanwhile you will permit me to say that your proposal[4] is subversive of the

[1] *Principles of Light and Colour* by E D Babbitt, obtained by the addressee in Switzerland

[2] The yarn spun by the addressee for his own *kurtas*

[3] *Vide* Vol. LI, Appendix II.

[4] *Vide* footnotes 1 and 2, p 174

spirit of the Yeravda Pact and wholly contrary to the object of the anti-untouchability movement.

Yours sincerely,

From a copy C.W. 7788 Courtesy: G. D. Birla

235. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

July 31, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

At this place one needs the tools every moment. I tried to obtain country-made tools, but could not. They are now being made at Bangalore. Meanwhile I sent for your kit as it was not needed at Maganwadi.

It seems some of the tools are missing. Whatever that may be, I have made a list of those that came to hand. You will find it on the reverse. Let me know which ones you remember having been lost. I shall arrange to search for them.

From the handwriting on the reverse you will see that Rajkumari is here. She came last evening. You will now admit that my place has become similar to your dharmashala—one corner to me, another to Rajkumari, a third to Tukdoji Maharaj and a fourth to Munnalal. In the centre are Ba, Lilavati and Manu; and Tukdoji includes himself and his followers who stream in all day long. Have you heard of him? He had come to see me at Nagpur.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati C.W. 7303. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

236. A TALK[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

Now, you must see that I am being compelled to grow a beard!

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The headman of Segaon had made clear to Gandhiji that he would not co-operate with him on the question of untouchability and for that reason the local barber was prevented from rendering his services to Gandhiji. For Gandhiji's talk with the headman, *vide* the following item.

"But my husband is ready to come whenever you summon him!", says the woman

That I know, but will he shave the Harijans?

I do not know that, Maharaj, but he is quite prepared to shave you

But how can I have his services when my Harijan brothers cannot have them?

Harijan, 1-8-1936

237. A TALK[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

So, Patil, I must remain without the services of the barber?

No, Mahatmaji, he is ready. Shall I send him?

I know you can send him. But what about my Harijan son? You must know that I have a family here and Govind is my son. How can I have the barber's services if he will not allow Govind to go near him? What would you do if you were in my position? Tell me Supposing you were invited to a place from where your son was deliberately excluded. Would you go there?

"Now, there, Bapuji, don't you touch him on the raw," says Jamnalalji, who has known the old Patil for years. "If someone could assure him that he would go straight to *swarga* (Heaven) if he were to cast off untouchability, he would do so But he wants a reliable assurance, and he would not accept ours" And the room resounds with laughter in which the old Patil joins. "Everything is permissible to a Mahatma like you, but not to folks like us," he says and returns

Harijan, 1-8-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

238. DISCUSSION WITH VISITORS[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

The sadhu or the Buva[2] who is for the moment a member of the family has for visitors a number of devotees They are frankly surprised that the sadhu is not only associating with the Mahatma but eats under his roof food cooked by a Harijan boy . They come and argue, sometimes the sadhu cannot solve their doubts and difficulties and they turn to Gandhiji.

[A VISITOR] But, even the lower creation observes untouchability, Mahatmaji, and you would have even man to shed it!

[GANDHIJI:] Now that's something novel. Let me understand.

Donkeys don't associate with dogs; a crow would not touch a pigeon's eggs. Every species has its own sphere, its own place, its own use in God's creation

But cows, donkeys and dogs will gladly remain under the same roof if you feed them and own them. And do you hold that there is the same difference between you and an untouchable, as there is between a cow and a dog?

Don't we shun wild animals?

You shun lions and tigers and snakes, because they are untouchable? Absurd! You shun them because you fear them. You would fain tame them if you could, and crowds flock and attribute miraculous powers to one who can domesticate them.

But we don't touch pigs because they are dirty, and not because we are afraid of them

Well, then, supposing a man in cleaner clothes looked upon you as dirty and regarded you as an untouchable, you won't mind? And what of your women who do all the dirty jobs for your children? They are the mistresses of the family. Why so?

Well, then, supposing the so-called untouchables were dressed as well as you, and washed themselves clean after doing the dirty jobs for you, and for which you should thank them

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Tukdoji Maharaj

rather than despise or shun them, would you touch them? Supposing they ate clean food and did not touch beef or carrion, would you touch them? I tell you there are numerous so-called Harijans in India who satisfy all these conditions, who live cleaner and purer lives than we do and yet we regard them as untouchables. How will God forgive this heinous sin of ours?

But you want us to admit them to the temples too! How can people doing dirty jobs be admitted to temples?

Have I ever asked them to go to temples with baskets of filth on their heads? Have I not said that they would satisfy all the conditions about bath and cleanliness that the other Hindus satisfy? According to you all surgeons and all nurses are unfit to go to our temples!

Harijan, 1-8-1936

239. DISCUSSION WITH A FRIEND[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

[FRIEND] Why do you insist on eight hours' manual work a day? Is it not possible in a well-ordered society to reduce the working day to two hours and leave the citizen ample leisure for intellectual and artistic pursuits?

[GANDHIJI:] We know that those who get all that leisure —both the working and the intellectual class—do not make the best use of it. In fact we too often find the idle mind being turned into the devil's workshop.

No; he would not be idling away. Supposing we divided the day into two hours' physical labour and six hours' intellectual labour; would it not be good for the nation?

I do not know that it would be feasible. I have not mathematically calculated it, but if a man will do the intellectual labour only for profit and not for the nation, I am sure that the scheme will break down; unless of course the State pays him amply for the two hours' labour and compels him to do other work without paying him anything. That would be a fine thing, but it cannot be done without a kind of State conscription.

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

But take for instance you. You cannot in the nature of things do eight hours' physical labour, and have to do eight hours' or more intellectual work. You do not abuse your leisure?

It is compulsory work and leaves no leisure, as for instance it would if I was going out to play tennis. But I tell you even taking my case that I am sure our minds would have been infinitely better if we laboured with our hands for eight hours. We would not have a single idle thought, and I may tell you that my mind is not entirely free from idle thoughts Even now I am what I am because I realized the value of physical labour at a very early stage of my life.

But then if physical work has such inherent virtue, our people have been working more than eight hours a day, not with any appreciable effect on the purity or strength of their minds.

Physical labour by itself is not an education even as mental labour is not. It has been with our people deadly drudgery without their knowing this, and that deadens one's finer instincts. That is where I have my strongest complaint against the *savarna* Hindus. They have rendered work for the proletariat a task of hard drudgery, from which they have no pleasure and in which they have no interest. If they had been considered members of the society enjoying the same status as they, theirs would have been the proudest position in life. This is supposed to be the *Kaliyuga*. In the *Satyayuga*, or golden age, whenever it was, the society I dare say was better ordered than today Ours is an ancient land where civilizations have come and gone, and it is difficult to say what exactly we were like in a particular age. But there is no doubt that we are where we are because we have long neglected the Shudras. Today's village culture, if culture it can be called, is an awful culture. The villagers live as worse than animals. Nature compels animals to work and live naturally. We have so debased our working classes that they cannot work and live naturally. If our people had laboured intelligently and with joy, we should have been quite different today.

Work and culture cannot be separated, then?

No. They tried to do it in ancient Rome and failed miserably. Culture without labour, or culture which is not the fruit of labour, would be 'Vomitoria' as a Roman Catholic writer says. The Romans made indulgence a habit, and were ruined. Man cannot develop his mind by simply writing and

reading or making speeches all day long. All my reading I tell you was done in the leisure hours I got in jails, and I have benefited by it because all of it was done not desultorily but for some purpose. And though I have worked physically for days and months for eight hours on end I don't think I suffered from mental decay. I have often walked as much as 40 miles a day and yet never felt dull.

But you had this mental equipment.

No fear. You don't know how mediocre I was at school and in England. I had never the courage to speak at debating society meetings or even in a gathering of vegetarians. No Don't you run away with the thought that I was blessed with any extraordinary powers. God, I think, advisedly did not give me then the power to speak. You must know, among us I am the least read man.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

240. DISCUSSION WITH STUDENTS OF VILLAGE WORKERS' TRAINING SCHOOL[1]

[Before *August 1, 1936*]

Q How to dispossess people of ill-gotten gains which is what the Socialists are out to do?

A. Who is to judge what gains or riches are ill-gotten or well-gotten? God alone can judge, or a competent authority appointed both by the 'haves' and the 'have-nots' can judge. Not anyone and everyone. But if you say that ALL property and possession is theft, all must give up property and wealth. Have we given it up? Let us make a beginning, expecting the rest to follow. For those who are convinced that their own possessions are ill-gotten, there is of course no other alternative but to give them up

Q. What is the root of violence? Does it not take place to prevent injustice and humiliation?

A. Hardly. The root of violence is selfishness, anger, lust, etc.

Q I have not made myself understood I see in front of me terrible wrong being done and I am provoked to violence. Is not the wrong at the root of it?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

A. No, anger is at the root of your violence. Whether your violence is justified or not on such an occasion is another question, but there is no doubt that anger is at the root.

Q. How to deal with beggars? How can we turn them away when we see they are famishing?

A. Beggars must be distinguished from famishing people. Beggars are often enough sturdy. Some are thieves. There is nothing like a right to beg, there is certainly a right to ask for work. And whilst you may not give alms, it is your duty to give work to those who ask for it.

Q. But how are you going to do it when you have work for four and eight turn up? Will you engage all the eight?

A. No, because I must recognize my limitations.

Q. Then they will beg rather than starve?

A. They shall not beg. They must do some work. I have not yet settled down in Segaon. When I do so I shall see that no one goes away for want of work. I will have spinning-wheels and *chakkis* for those who being in want of work ask for it.

Q. When we go to villages we are bound to come up against opposition. For instance, they are opposed to sanitation work. What are we to do?

A. We have to put up with the opposition.

Q. They boycott us, they will not allow us to use their wells.

A. They may; we will use other wells, but we shall not fight them. We will not provoke them, but argue with them until they understand. We have to face all kinds of difficulties.

Q. My difficulty is that if my sanitation work scares people away, if they will not attend the prayers, if they will not do even spinning, must I persist?

A. It depends on the spirit in which you have sat down there. If you have gone there principally for sanitation work, you will certainly not give it up, whatever happens. After all we will certainly do our own sanitation, keep our own surroundings clean. But it is open to one to begin with spinning, night classes, etc., and go on to sanitation if one thinks that that would enable one to do one's work easier.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

241. A COBWEB OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS

I have before me a number of cuttings from various Urdu papers severely and even bitterly criticizing the proceedings[1] of the recently formed Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad and thereanent Babu Rajendra Prasad, Babu Purushottamdas Tandon, Pandit Jawaharlal and me They attribute motives and designs to which, I know, we are all strangers. The writers have not taken the trouble of even understanding what was said or done by us or at the Parishad Thus they think that the design at the bottom of the Association is to push Hindi at the expense of Urdu, and so to Sanskritize Hindi as to make it almost impossible for Mussalmans to understand it. They also infer from a speech of Babu Purushottamdas Tandon delivered at Allahabad at the time of the opening of the Literary Museum of the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan that he distorted facts when he claimed that there were nearly 23 crores of Indians who spoke or at least understood Hindi. There are in these writings other innuendoes which I need not notice, my purpose being simply to remove if possible the misunderstandings that have led to the innuendoes.

To take the last first. If the writers had the whole speech of Tandonji before them they would have known that in the 23 crores he deliberately included the Urdu-speaking Hindus and Mussalmans. He therefore included Urdu in the use of the word Hindi This will be clear if it is borne in mind that Hindi according to the resolution adopted at Indore in 1935,[2] to which Tandonji was party, meant that language which was spoken in the North by Hindus and Mussalmans and was written either in Devanagari or Urdu scripts. If the writers had known this definition, surely they would have had no complaint on any account unless they objected to the very name Hindi. If they did, it was deplorable. Hindi is the original word for the language of the North. Urdu, as is well known, was the name specially given for a special purpose. The script was also a graft for the convenience of the Muslim rulers. If

[1] At Nagpur, *vide* Vol LXII, pp 344-7

[2] At the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held from April 20 to 23, *vide* Vol. LXI, pp. 31-3

that is the historical sequence, there ought not to be any opposition to the use of the word 'Hindi' so long as it is used inclusively. In any event at the most the difference, if there must be any, narrows itself down to the use of one word or the other for signifying the same thing

The complaint about Sanskritizing has some justification in that some writers of Hindi insist on unnecessarily introducing Sanskrit words in their writings. A similar charge can justly be brought against some Urdu writers who insist on equally unnecessarily introducing Persian or Arabic words. And what is worse, they even alter the grammar of the language. These extremes are bound to disappear in course of time because they would never be adopted by the masses. A speech that is beyond the comprehension of the masses has but a brief existence.

As for the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad, it aims at making through Hindi as above defined available to the whole of India the best thought in the provinces. Surely there is in this nothing sinister or communal, as suggested in some writings.

The adoption of 'Hindi-Hindustani' was at my instance. It was adopted in order to bring out in a compound word the meaning of the definition of Hindi. Moulvi Abdul Kadar Sahib had suggested the use either only of Hindustani or Hindi-Urdu instead of Hindi-Hindustani. I should personally have no objection to either course, but the Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad could not ignore its own origin. The idea was born at the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore and took a definite shape at Nagpur under its aegis The retention of the word 'Hindi' was therefore necessary in the nature of things. The substitution of Urdu would have been bad for the reasons I have already stated. But as I have endeavoured to show, Hindi, Hindustani and Urdu are synonymous terms and refer substantially to the same language.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

242. A CRIMINAL TRIBE

Perhaps there are not many places on this globe where crime is the profession of tribes as it is in India and it flourishes under the garb of religion We have therefore in this country a law called the Criminal Tribes Act. The Aheris of Hissar District are supposed to be one of such tribes. On 7th June a conference of Aheris was held in the village of Gangan Kheri under the presidentship of Lala Thakurdas Bhargava. It was attended by over 1,000 Aheris and over 200 *savarna* Hindus. From the report before me it appears that the Aheris were told by some persons that if they embraced Islam they would be helped to become free from the application of the Act and the stigma of being a criminal tribe would no longer attach to them. Therefore the Aheris assembled declared their 'undying faith' in Hinduism and appealed to the Government to free them from the application of the Act.

In these days of ferment mere conferences and resolutions will not prevent appeals for conversions against material inducements nor bring the freedom sought. The only way to avert danger of defection and to procure freedom from special hardships is self-purification and selfless continuous service of the depressed people by the *savarnas*. Criminal tribes and untouchable castes are a scourge upon Hindu society for its godless treatment of its own members in the sacred name of religion. You cannot have a diseased limb without the whole body being affected. Therefore the only effective method is reform from within. If the whole society is purified, it will be immune from external attacks, no matter how fierce they are. Conversely, no battling against external attacks can prevent internal disintegration. Indeed the energy expended in repelling external attacks must result in further exhaustion and therefore speedier destruction I hope that the responsible *savarna* Hindus who attended the Conference will continue the work begun at the Conference and direct their energy in constructive channels.

Harijan, 1-8-1936

243. LETTER TO RAFI AHMED KIDWAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 1, 1936

MY DEAR KIDWAI,

To ask for a message from me is like drawing . . .[1] live tooth and then too for a meeting such as you are describing. Surely at a meeting at which Mr. Jinnah presides and which Jawaharlal opens any message would be superfluous.

Yours sincerely,

MOULVI RAFI AHMED KIDWAI
4A RUTTLEDGE ROAD
LUCKNOW

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

244. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

August 1, 1936

CHI. BAL,

From my experiments in cooking I have come to the following conclusions: By cooking for oneself one saves money, improves health, becomes more enthusiastic and improves general knowledge. One also automatically gains knowledge of the science of nutrition and becomes more efficient in serving food to others.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] The source is damaged here.

245. *LETTER TO KIKABHAI LAVAJI*

August 1, 1936

BHAI KIKABHAI,

I have received your letter. We can say that Yeravda Pact is for all. If it finds appeal, everything will be all right. I see no need for reprinting it now. If it is necessary, I shall certainly have it reprinted.

We must put up with whatever Dr. Ambedkar says One who is born a Hindu would not give up his religion because of the misdeeds of other Hindus We can very well say that Harijans are unhappy because of their deeds. But a person like me would not forget that the ill-treatment by the so-called *savarna* Hindus adds to their unhappiness. If the *savarna* Hindus mend their ways and repent of their deeds, then very soon the seeming faults of Harijans will be on the wane even if they do not go root and branch.

Drinking will certainly increase with the increase in the number of mills.

BAPU

KIKABHAI LAVAJI
PATTHAR KUVA
AHMEDABAD

From a copy of the Gujarati Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

246. *LETTER TO VALLABHBHAI PATEL*

August 1, 1936

BHAI VALLABHBHAI,

It is good that you got the operation done If it proves successful, you will have permanent relief

You must have received the copy of my reply to Rajaram.[1] If you have not replied yet, I suggest this: "Your letter contains no fresh point which calls for a reply. I have, therefore, nothing to add to my previous letter."

[1] The letter is not traceable

Do not be in a hurry to leave the hospital and do not resume work without taking complete rest.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Gujarati]
Bapuna Patro–2 · Sardar Vallabhbhaine, pp. 196-7

247. LETTER TO GANGABEHN B. JHAVERI

August 1, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

After a long time I did receive your letter. I cannot form any opinion about the new school. I cannot swallow the views of its manager which are destructive of morality However, treat this view of mine as of no consequence. Consult Pannalal and, having heard him, do what you wish.

If you have not read everything pertaining to socialism, then take a decision only after reading something more about it Socialism is one thing and Jawaharlal is another. There has always been a difference between individuals and ideology

From a copy of the Gujarati Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

248 LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

August 1, 1936

CHI KRISHNACHANDRA,

Your letter You will fall and rise, fall again and rise again and by thus falling and rising attain success. Never give up your efforts. You must certainly write to me but you may not expect a reply from me as I have no time to spare If I have I shall scribble a couple of lines.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G N 4287

249. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 2, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

This time Manilal did not write to me. I am writing this with my left hand as the right one is tired. Let those who want to brag about Harilal's action do so with pleasure. Here at any rate they have almost forgotten him and he is always under the influence of drink The fault must lie somewhere in my own method of bringing him up. Mine has been a life of wanderings and it has had a number of vicissitudes It is quite obvious that I could not manage it all

Manu is with me at present, enjoying herself And of course Ba and Lilavati are also with me. Sushila ought to control her palate and improve her health Indulging the palate is not limited to eating starchy foods and sugar alone. You can get so much fruit there that you can very well maintain your health. Milk and fresh fruit must improve your health. Moreover, you must never miss your daily walk.

Ramdas, one may say, has now settled down. Nimu too has gone to join him Devdas and Lakshmi are in Delhi.

Kishorelal went to Akola and from there to Bombay.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 4855

250. LETTER TO RAOJIBHAI M. PATEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 3, 1936.

CHI. RAOJIBHAI,

Your letter. You may take it that Andrews has left Fiji. All the same I shall make inquiries.

It would be nice if you could procure good ghee. On my part, I have been insisting on producing it at Maganwadi, where we now have an expert. At Segaon, too, I am having a cow.

Your work seems to be going on well. Write to me from time to time.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAOJIBHAI
P. O. PETLAD *via* ANAND
B. B. & C. I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 9008

251. LETTER TO B. K. DIWANJI

SEGAON, WARDHA, C. P.
August 4, 1936

DEAR DIWANJI,

It cannot be desirable for Indians to act as agents of foreign concerns whose traffic is detrimental to the moral or material interests of the country. This covers all your questions but I may add that acceptance of advertisements, Indian or foreign, whose object is to advertise things which are contrary to the policy advocated by the newspapers cannot be defended

The medical profession is a noble profession only when medical men practise it for service, not for money, and if they give predominant place to prevention rather than cure, and accept the limits to their remedial measures so that they are not contrary to humanness towards non-human life.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

252. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

August 4, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

Since he[1] insists on starting another magazine, why should we retain *Hans*? Why not write to him.

"Since you contemplate another magazine you must keep *Hans*. Parishad can easily manage with other title."[2]

You may carry out your own suggestion if you do not think this right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati C W 7604 Courtesy K M Munshi

253. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 5, 1936

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

You may be late replying but I must reply per return. I know what it means for a prisoner to hear from friends

I share your regret that we cannot freely exchange views [even] on absolutely non-political questions.

I am surprised that you are not getting your copy of *Harijan*. I am inquiring.

Yes, my dietetic experiments continue unabated Just now I am trying to find jungly edible leaves, and I have succeeded beyond expectations. I am not having any fresh vegetables from outside Segaon The second thing I am doing [is]-to use lemons and *gur* [as] an effective substitute for fresh fruit

After many experiments I have come to the conclusion that cow milk, fresh green vegetables (including leaves and fruit of plants), onion and garlic, wheat or any other grain, *gur* and any

[1] Munshi Premchand
[2] This paragraph is in English

juicy fruit make a perfect diet. Generally I recommend avoidance of pulses for brain workers—vegetable protein is not so easy to digest as animal protein. I have mentioned onion and garlic. They are both strongly recommended by many medical men.

Yours sincerely,

SHRI SUBHAS BOSE
C/O SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE
DARJEELING

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

254. LETTER TO SAHEBJI MAHARAJ

August 5, 1936

DEAR SAHEBJI MAHARAJ,

Many thanks for your letter We shall await the *mistry* on the 12th. He will be paid his travelling expenses to and fro and the pay will begin as from the date of his departure from Agra.

I am expecting much out of this experiment.[1]

Yours sincerely,
M K. GANDHI

From a photostat G.N. 2165

255. LETTER TO GANGABEHN VAIDYA

August 5, 1936

CHI. GANGABEHN,

Why need you fall into despair? Why do you feel that you have wasted fifty-seven years? Ever since I have known you, I have observed that you are always striving. God has given man only the strength to strive and nothing more. If we ever remain absorbed in doing our duty without lethargy, we have no reason to feel despair.

[1] *Vide* letter to the addressee, p. 166.

Ramibai seems to be very unhappy. Can anything be done to help her? I understand about Bachubhai.

Blessings from
BAPU

SMT. GANGABEHN VAIDYA
RAMBAG, BORIVLI
B.B & C I. RLY.

[From Gujarati]

Bapuna Patro–6 G S Gangabehnne, p 94 Also C W 8834. Courtesy. Gangabehn Vaidya

256 LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 6, 1936

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

You are reported to have said: "When he (Gandhi) openly says that his object is to run down the Tilak school of politics, etc , etc." If you have said it, will you kindly let me know when I did so? I have no recollection of ever having said any such thing and how could I when, as you rightly say, I have "carried forward the work of Mr. Tilak"?[1]

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat· C.W. 3120 Courtesy Kashinath N Kelkar

[1] In his reply the addressee said "The work of Tilak which you have carried forward is the work of intensive political agitation, but by the Tilak 'school' of politics I mean Tilak's philosophy and methods and in respect of these, you and he vastly differ" . "Your open insistence on non-violence, truth and non-co-operation was taken to imply that the school of political thought you superseded favoured the antithesis of these three " *Vide* also "Letter to N. C Kelkar", 24-8-1936

257. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 7, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I read both the letters. Other things later. Parnerkar has not come to me so far.

The interview[1] was all right but I see nothing hopeful in it; he will not be able to do a thing. Their policy and ours are poles apart I firmly hold that no further overtures should be made to him It is not correct to say that I had made any promise. Whatever I did was all worth doing. This is the reason why it was done and not because of any promise of mine. It was not in the public interest to proceed any further I write all this in order to make things clear for the future.

What can I do in connection with the elections? Yes, I can try to avoid friction within the Congress; in fact I am already engaged in this.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C W 8021 Courtesy. G. D. Birla

258 INTERVIEW TO PAULA LECLER AND Y. S. CHEN[2]

[Before *August 8, 1936*]

In reply to several questions Gandhiji said.

On the political programme you should go and visit Pandit Nehru who, though he is busier than I, might give you a useful half hour. I am no authority on politics, and having retired from the Congress for two years now, I am a kind of a back number.

But may it not be that you have retired to give the other people a chance, and in the conviction that after they have had their chance they are bound to come back to you?

[1] The addressee had met the Viceroy Lord Linlithgow on August 5, 1936.

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Paula Lecler was an American woman and Y S Chen a member of the Cotton Industry Commission of China

That is not my way. I am a votary of truth. I meant it cent per cent when I retired from the Congress and the so-called politics of the country. My mind and body are buried in Segaon. What the future has in store for me God alone knows.

[Y. S. CHEN] Your body is here, but your spirit travels over the whole world.

Yes, but not my political spirit What I am doing today, i e., living in a village, I might have done in the beginning of my career. Instead I am doing it in the evening of my life.[1]

The American lady wanted him to give a message to the distracted world as to how best to get out of the trouble and chaos

I am off talking. I can give you no message You can see what I am doing if you will stay in this village. How to help the world out of chaos is a vast question which cannot be answered at a moment's notice. But if there is an answer it is this. 'By waiting on God'.

I want to transmit to America a picture of the faith and light you have

I could not give it by word of mouth I am not in a talking mood

But you have your faith?

Oh yes, I have.

Then could you not put it in a few words?

How can I impart it in words?

Then you can just say a few words of prayer, i e, what is your innermost desire You can just pray audibly

No, I cannot possibly do so Is it not enough for you to know that I am trying to live a simple village life as a simple villager? When I succeed in it I shall have achieved my ambition

And what happens to your children, the people of India?

They are in the villages. I live with them They will live with me.

[1] Paula Lecler here quotes Gandhiji having said "You may be sure I am living now just the way I wish to live What I might have done at the beginning, had I more light, I am doing now in the evening of my life, at the end of my career, building from the bottom up. Study my way of living here, study my surroundings, if you wish to know what I am Village improvement is the only foundation on which conditions in India can be permanently ameliorated"

Are you happy?

Ah! I can answer that question. I am perfectly happy.

More happy than you were outside the village?

I cannot say, for my happiness is not dependent on external circumstances.

[Y. S. CHEN.] wanted to know something about our social programme

I have no doubt that untouchability is going. It can go quicker, but we have not got a corps of social workers adequate to the task. It is social work indeed, but more than that it is great spiritual effort. If untouchability remains, Hinduism perishes and with it Hindu culture. And if that calamity comes, the whole face of India will be changed. The ruining of Hindu culture is fraught with incalculable harm for the general culture of India. But I am firm in my faith that untouchability is bound to go, it is going. Here you will see I am surrounded by untouchables. We have, for instance, for our cook an untouchable boy. He never knew cooking, certainly he did not know how to cook hygienically He is now learning it. He is a fine boy, eager to learn, and hard-working. This process is going on throughout India. The best of our workers are trying to work amongst the untouchables in this fashion. That is the complete reform. We have to obliterate all the differences of social status. That is the essence of this part of our social reform.

I want to correct the impression that has got abroad in America that Mr Gandhi is sulking. . . . But what is the truth about the supposed antagonism between you and Nehru?

You must see my disclaimer.[1]

I have seen it.

I have said that it was an absolute travesty, an absolute falsehood.

What is your feeling about Nehru?

My feeling about Nehru is nothing but that of love and admiration. We are not estranged from each other. I hear from him nearly twice a week.[2] There are things on which I do

[1] *Vide* "Are We Rivals?", pp. 164-5

[2] Paula Lecler quotes here: "Jawaharlal Nehru and I are friends. It is true our beliefs may differ in some ways But to say there is enmity between us, that is a lie. Even when he is travelling around the country on speaking tours, as he has been doing, I hear from him at least twice each week There is no rivalry in work like ours."

not talk the same way There are obvious differences in outlook, but in spite of them our affection has not diminished. And these differences are not new He has never kept from me whatever he has felt from time to time Even what he said in Lucknow was not new. It was a summary of views he had stated in different places on different occasions.

But you don't see the truth entirely his way?

I don't. But it is one thing to say that I do not sympathize with some of his views and quite another to say that he had ruined my life-work! It is a lie. There is no other name for it.[1] I have never had even the suspicion that Jawaharlal's policy has ruined any part of my work.

Because the truth you stand for is still there?

That is a truism I am not talking from that higher philosophical point of view I am just talking in mundane terms. I want to say that he has taken no such steps as would ruin my programme or my work If he had said 'You have blundered all along You must retrace your steps You have taken the country back a century,' as some have certainly said, he, because he is he, would embarrass me But he has said nothing of the kind. Also, it is not wholly true to say that I do not sympathize with his programme What is he doing today with which I cannot sympathize? His enunciation of scientific socialism does not jar on me I have been living the life since 1906 that he would have all India to live To say that he favours Russian communism is a travesty of truth.[2] He says it is good for Russia, but he does not give an unequivocal certificate to it even about Russia. As for India, he has said plainly that the methods to be adopted in India would have to answer India's needs He does not say that there must be class war, though he thinks it may be inevitable,[3] and only recently he declared emphatically that there should be no confiscation without compensation. There is nothing in all this

[1] Paula Lecler reports here "They quoted me. 'My life-work is ruined not even the firmness and repression of the British Government have harmed my work as much as the policy outlined by Nehru' But much as I dislike to use so strong a word, it is an absolute lie I never said anything like that nor do I think it"

[2] Paula Lecler reports: "To say he favours communism on the Russian model is doing a grave injustice to Jawaharlal."

[3] Paula Lecler adds here "I believe he thinks a class war may be inevitable, but he is doing his best to avert one"

which I oppose. Nevertheless there are differences of method; but to say that they make us opponents or rivals is a caricature.[1]

There is nothing he believes, nothing in his programme today about which I can say, as I certainly would if I felt that way. I oppose this tooth and nail. I would not present the same thing in the same way. Certain methods I adopted Jawaharlal would not adopt

Are you fond of him?

Yes, as I am fond of you. But that is not saying anything much.

Do you approve of him for India?

Yes.

This our friend had got the impression in Karachi that your own internal cleavages were far worse than outside tyranny, and that was the impression she was going to fly off with to America.

That remark of hers elicited one sentence of withering criticism from Gandhiji.

If I did not believe in human nature, I would say that to give you that impression was a diabolical plot to blacken India's name.

Asked if he would emerge from his retirement to lead his people if they again needed him, Gandhiji replied firmly, with a quick look from under irregular eyebrows at his interrogator

That depends upon God I never decide beforehand but wait for the contingency to decide. Planning ahead for myself, even for a few years, is opposed to my principles

Harijan, 8-8-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 7-3-1937

259. TWO PEN-PICTURES

Babu Hara Dayal Nag, the G. O. M. of Bengal, is never weary of well-doing. In the constancy of love of his country he is not to be excelled. The reader will appreciate the following instructive description[2] of his village as he saw it in his youth and as it is today.

Harijan, 8-8-1936

[1] The paragraph that follows is from Paula Lecler's report reproduced in *The Bombay Chronicle*

[2] Not reproduced here

260. PROPAGANDA BY VILIFICATION

A correspondent sends me a proselytizing pamphlet, being a Gujarati version of the original in Urdu. The Gujarati translator and publisher is Shekh Umarbhai Mohmedbhai and the pamphlet is printed in Ahmedabad. I take the following[1] from the correspondent's letter.

> Permit me to send you a copy of a pamphlet published with a view to induce Harijans for conversion to Islam and create hatred among them against Hindus This pamphlet is full of such remarks about the Hindu religion and the Hindu rites as are not only false but are likely to intensify the communal tension. .
>
> You will kindly . . suggest the course to be adopted so that these poor and illiterate Harijan people may not be entrapped by such false and inflammatory pamphlets

I had the pain of going through the pamphlet It is as mischievous as it has been described by the correspondent It is in the form of a dialogue between two Harijans, father and son. At the instance of the father the son reads Hindu scriptures and ridicules them. Everything held sacred by Hindus is caricatured so as to excite disgust towards Hinduism and *savarna* Hindus. Even the sacred name of Swami Shraddhanandji has been dragged in the discussion and words have been put into his mouth which I hold him to be incapable of having uttered. Here is a sentence which no gentleman would write of his fellow-men: "Some Hindus sit in squares smeared with cow-dung as if they were sitting to evacuate themselves. Cursed be such eaters." The pamphlet is full of distortions And it holds out material hopes to Harijans which can hardly be fulfilled especially about the mass of Harijans if they are ever tempted to forsake their ancestral faith. Thus the Moulvi who is responsible for the conversion of the Harijan's son is represented to be a convert from being a Chamar and having married a girl belonging to a noble Muslim family. The new convert drinks from the same cup as the Moulvi and the remains of the water are drunk by the company. He is treated to a feast at a Munshi's palatial house. The feast fills the dining hall with fragrance. "Every morsel was a nectar, every potion was

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here.

the water of life," and, this erstwhile Harijan is treated to the inhalation of a *hookah* which goes the round of the whole company.

It is tragic to see that religion is dragged down to the low level of crude materialism to lure people into which the most cherished sentiments of millions of human being are trodden underfoot.

I hope that the pamphlet has no support from thoughtful Mussalmans who should read it to realize the mischief such pamphlets can create.

My correspondent asks me how to deal with the menace. One remedy I have applied, viz., to bring hereby the vilifying propaganda to the notice of the responsible Muslim world. He himself can claim the attention of the local Mussalman leaders to the publication. The second and the most important thing to do is purification from within. So long as the poison of untouchability remains in the Hindu body, it will be liable to attacks from outside. It will be proof against such attacks only when a solid and impregnable wall of purification is erected in the shape of complete removal of untouchability.

Harijan, 8-8-1936

261. NOTES

Wheelers, Not Shoulders

Shri C. Tejpal has for years been conducting a campaign in favour of using light vehicles instead of shoulders for carrying dead bodies. He knows that he has to fight against a sentiment cherished by millions of Hindus and Mussalmans from times immemorial. Persons vie with one another in giving their shoulders for carrying the dead. The carrying of corpses on human shoulders is an impressive sight. So at any rate we have been used to think But apart from sentiment there is nothing to recommend the practice. Where the burial ground or the crematorium is some distance from the place where death occurs, carrying on shoulders becomes a trying task. Again when a caste has only a few members, or it is a poor man who has lost a relative, no matter how near the place of disposal is the question assumes serious proportions. And we know that in times of plague and famine corpses are often left in the streets to rot or to be food for vultures. There is no doubt, therefore, that there is much to be said in favour of carrying corpses on carts. Shri Tejpal has constructed a cart which costs a little over 100 rupees.

In a poor country like India a hundred rupees is a consideration not to be lightly dismissed. But if village Mahajans[1] and municipalities were to own such carts and hire them out at a trifling charge, the question of expense can be eliminated. And local enthusiasts who appreciate the reform may popularize the practice in their surroundings. Shri Tejpal informs me that the Municipality of Ahmedabad keeps one such cart and so do Mahajans or Seva Samitis in Surat, Baroda, Jamnagar and Porbandar. The Prarthana Samaj of Bombay is also reported to have one. It will be interesting to know the extent to which the reform has made headway in the places where such carts are kept.

HAND-GINNING

Like the wheel, the carding-bow and the hand-gins have been undergoing progressive improvements though not to the same extent as the wheel. But the processes anterior to spinning are just as important as spinning itself. Evenness, strength and speed depend upon good cotton, good picking, good ginning and good carding. If any of the processes are defective, they tell upon the quality and the quantity of yarn turned out in a given time. Experiments are therefore being conducted by Shri Radhakrishna Bajaj in Wardha in finding out the possibility of improvement in the hand-gin. If there are khadi lovers who have made improvements, they should correspond with Shri Radhakrishna and send him specimens if any.

Harijan, 8-8-1936

262. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 9, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Yes, it is well for you not to come. I am sending more milk. If not wanted, let Motibehn bring it back

Love.

BAPU

From the original C.W 6358. Courtesy. Mirabehn Also G.N. 9824

[1] A representative body of responsible citizens

263. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

How you have hurt me like a thorn![1] Since I had this news, your face has been present before my mind's eye, and I have been brooding constantly What is this that has happened and why did you do it? But how could you help it? Who could overcome his nature? And it is quite proper that you should not curb your nature, as this would only lead to hypocrisy. It is thus I console myself. I am considering what I can do, within my limits, to help you fulfil your ambition.

I shall send you a *dhoti* if you write to me the length and the width you want. Or, you may yourself cut it out when you come here. I have three rolls with me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati C.W. 7304. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

264. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 9/10, 1936

CHI. KANAIYO,

Tell Chhotelal to send me two vessels each big enough to hold five to seven seers of milk. They should preferably be tin-coated brass ones. Zinc vessels will do if they are cheaper.

Send me some mustard oil.

A few letters accompany this.

I want hand-made paper for making note-books, etc.

Blessings from
BAPU

P. T. O.

[1] The reference is to the addressee wanting to have formal education and a degree; *vide* "Letter to Manilal and Sushila Gandhi", p. 227.

August 10, 1936

On the reverse I wrote yesterday.

But it got left behind. I find, however, that it was not very urgent. I am now sending some letters and an article. I propose to send some more later. I want the enema things we have here. If they are needed there, new ones have to be bought for this place.

BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M M U /II

265. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 10, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I hope the progress will continue. If there is any complication, you will at once let me know.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W 6359. Courtesy Mirabehn. Also G N. 9825

266. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 10, 1936[1]

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Khan Saheb has received the usual notice to attend the meetings[2] in Bombay. He has no desire to attend them and I do not want to press him And in Bombay he will be asked to attend meetings and functions at which he would be called upon to speak I do not want him to do so just now. I want him rather to pass the year with me. And he is none too strong nor invulnerable to attacks of illness. Will you, therefore, please excuse him from attendance?

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1934 Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] In the source this letter is placed among 1934 papers and the same year is assigned to it in *A Bunch of Old Letters*. This however is a mistake as Gandhiji shifted to Segaon only in 1936.

[2] Of the A I C. C.

267 LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

August 10, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I had a reason for not being content with a three-pice postcard[1]

I didn't get your *rakhdi*[2]. I would certainly have worn it had I received it. Since you sent one, however, you have had the joy and earned the merit of sending it.

You seem to be picking up knowledge of a good many subjects. I shall at any rate glance through the book sent by you

I can certainly enlarge the area of experience in Segaon, but not just now I have neither the time nor the inclination. The experiences don't seem to me worth communicating to anybody.

Man's speech has a conventional meaning but in addition each utterance also has a specific meaning intended by the speaker which can be known from the context. Nobody has known truth in its perfection and, therefore, each person describes a thing as he sees it and that is the truth for him, even though as a matter of fact his view might be false.

In like manner man's view of a thing changes from age to age and the view held in a particular age is the truth for that age. This is the meaning or idea in *asato ma sadgamaya*[3].

Where the notion of high and low has disappeared I see no harm in the Shudras serving the other three varnas.[4] [Nobody][5] is compelled to be a Shudra. [If, then, service is the natural bent of mind of a Shudra,][6] why should he change that calling for another? If the Brahmin and the Bhangi both get just enough for their sustenance, what is the difference between the two? Nobody

[1] The addressee had enquired why Gandhiji had used an envelope for his letter dated July 22, 1936, when the matter could have been fitted in a postcard

[2] The thread tied by a sister to her brother's wrist symbolizing the brother's obligation to protect her

[3] Lead me from untruth to truth

[4] The addressee had maintained that the whole tradition of the saint-poets of Maharashtra had more or less acknowledged the idea of high and low as inherent in the varna system, how then could they look upon all with equality?

[5]&[6] These two sentences are incomplete in the source.

will prevent a Bhangi from becoming a *jnani*[1]. In the varna system of my conception, no varna will have the monopoly of knowledge. Think over the verses in the women's prayer.[2] What are the common dharmas of the four varnas? Maybe you will find some utterances of Jnanadeva[3] and others which seem to support the distinction of high and low. But nobody should be judged in this way by a few isolated sayings of his. I know what you wish to say regarding Ramdas[4]. Even if those examples could be shown to be inapplicable, my argument remains untouched.

I cannot accede to your request, for you have given no thought as to its propriety You have just been carried away by the present tide. You, I and all others are cast in the moulds inherited from our parents There is as much sense, or lack of sense, in rejecting it as there is in forgetting the fact and claiming ourselves to be different. We can remain in the old mould and still make many changes. That is growth or progress. To assume a completely new appearance will mean a total revolution or a new religion altogether. Does Hinduism have no definite mould in any respect? Children daily trace new letters in water which disappear the moment they are formed, but they enjoy the game. It seems you wish to do the same. But do you think you can lure an old man of 67 who has grown up in the old mould, and interest him in drawing circles in water? Standing on the bank, I watch the play of such as you. In the next issue of *Harijan*, you will see something having a bearing on this in my comments on a letter.[5]

You have discovered my ignorance all right. If you search more, you will discover still grosser ignorance. But I hope you will not desert me when you have discovered all my ignorance. If you promise me that, I will confess that I don't know anything at all, for I have not made such a study.

I have read enough about communism to satisfy me. What we shall need in swaraj I can tell only when I see the swaraj. Any opposition from me that you may notice will be concerning the question of truth-untruth and violence-non-violence.

Blessings from

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N 10384 Also C W 6822 Courtesy: Premabehn Kantak

[1] A spiritually enlightened person

[2] *Vide* Vol XLIV, p 399

[3] Jnaneshwara, saint-poet of Maharashtra

[4] Samartha Ramdas Swami, Shivaji's guru

[5] *Vide* "Varna *v* Caste", pp 225-6.

268. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 10, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am enclosing Prema's letter. Lilavati does not wish to move out of this place, though you have been inviting her and, on my part, I have gladly given the permission. She is very unsettled in her mind and wants to try and see if she can steady herself with a year's effort. And she believes that going there might disturb her. There is some truth in it, no doubt.

I therefore recommend that you manage without her if you can. Yesterday she told me that she was going to write to you.

Kanaiyo comes often to see me. I see he is in a very happy mood.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M M U./II. Also C.W. 8501 Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

269. LETTER TO NARAHARI D. PARIKH

August 10, 1936

CHI. NARAHARI,

Have you ever extracted juice from a dried lemon? If you say 'no', how will you squeeze out of me a lesson for your series of readers? I went through your circular request. It is good, but not for me. I would stop all writing if I could have my way. Don't ask for anything new. Go ahead with your work, taking me as gone.

Maruti[1] desires to build a house. The land should be from the Harijan Ashram. What happened to Avantikabai's[2] plot? Can we give him that or some part of it? Or he might keep with us the sum he wishes to invest and so long as he does so he might put the land to his use and enjoy ownership rights

[1] Husband of Lakshmi, a Harijan girl adopted by Gandhiji

[2] Avantikabai Gokhale

of the house. If it does not suit us, we may return his deposit after estimating the current value of the property I am saying all this on the supposition that Avantikabai's land might not be available or that the Ashram land might not be sold. For my part, I have no objection whatever to selling it. Think over the whole matter and do what seems proper.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S N 9098

270. LETTER TO H L. SHARMA

August 10, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

Your letter. I feel ashamed that Babbitt's book has not yet been found though I am sure it will be found. The yarn got mixed up with the other yarns. You should accept the khadi from me. . . .[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 259

271. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 12, 1936

BAPA,

You have made a pretty full miscellany of a single letter. I hope Devdas's presence causes no distraction to life there.

I had a long letter from Malkani whose plight is indeed pitiable The question constantly occurs to me whether to call Rukmini a shrew or an absolutely foolish person.

What shall we do about Satis Babu? On the one hand he has made a great sacrifice and, on the other, he is very suspicious by nature. Of course we shall be able to keep him as long as we wish to.

[1] The last sentence is illegible, the original having been damaged

Ramachandran has caused me a surprise. Let me know if any difficulty concerning him arises.

Surely, some day you are going to look at things at Segaon. . . .[1] Tukdoji occupies the corner in front of me, Khan Saheb the one beside me; Munnalal by Tukdoji's side. Rajkumari's bed is between me and Tukdoji On the wooden stand before her rests a rustic medicine box which is nothing but a used fruit-case and other odds and ends. Ba, Lilavati and Manu accommodate themselves where they can. Again, we have quite a different scene at night. Isn't 'houselessness' one of the distinguishing characteristics of a *bhakta*? At any rate, am I not indulging in all sorts of pranks, trying to play the *bhakta*? Whatever it may be to others, Segaon is to me an inexhaustible source of joy. Yesterday the last corner fell vacant—for the present at least Munnalal's of course is permanent.

I expect you are doing well.

BAPU

[PS.]

I had very little time even to scribble this silly stuff. But shouldn't I rather relax in this way? I have only followed you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1169

272. LETTER TO MANGIBAI

SEGAON,
August 13, 1936

CHI. MANGIBAI,

I have just heard of your husband's death. Why should we grieve over the death of our loved ones. In the long run death spares no one. This too should be regarded as one of God's blessings. Now be calm and devote yourself to service.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 172

[1] A word or two are illegible here.

273. *TALK WITH A PATIL*[1]

[Before *August 15, 1936*]

The old Patil went one evening to Gandhiji saying, "I am ready to have the barber's services . . immediately after he has served Govind."[2]

[GANDHIJI:] What then is the difficulty?

[PATIL.] But now he is asking of me a thing I cannot give.

[GANDHIJI:] What is that?

[PATIL.] It is that I should once go and feed at his place. With God as witness, Maharaj, I say I have never in my life of about four score years had tea or any kind of refreshment in a hotel. How does he expect me to go and feed at his place?

I quite appreciate what you say, but why does he insist on your feeding at his place?

Because he thinks his castemen might boycott him, and he wants to make assurance doubly sure by having me in his place to eat. Now, Maharaj, is that part of your anti-untouchability programme?

Certainly not. I am satisfied if you have conquered the prejudice of touch. Inter-dining is no part of the anti-untouchability programme, though as you know I am having Govind to cook for me. But that is what I would expect every Harijan sevak to do, not you.

Harijan, 15-8-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter", 15-8-1936

[2] The barber for fear of being boycotted by the village Patil and others had refused to shave Govind, a Harijan boy

274. TALK WITH A BARBER[1]

SEGAON,
[Before *August 15, 1936*]

One morning when I went to Segaon, I found Gandhiji busy pulling to pieces a hair-cropping machine, in order to clean and oil it. That done, he began having a crop with his own hands with a mirror in front of him.

At the same moment one of the devotees of the sadhu came in, and he happened to be a barber. "Bapuji," shouted the sadhu from the opposite corner, "Let Bhima crop your hair. He knows the art."

[GANDHIJI:] But how does he know it?

He is a barber by profession.

Ah, that is very good. Come along then.

But as soon as Bhima began the operation, Gandhiji asked him:

But I hope you have no prejudice against shaving our Harijan brethren. Have you?

He slightly hesitated, and said: "I have in my heart no prejudice against Harijans."

That I can believe. But will you shave a Harijan on the same terms as you would shave me?

Again he hesitated. Thereupon Gandhiji said to the sadhu:

I thought you had ascertained from him this thing before you asked me to have his services.

"I am sorry," said the sadhu, "that aspect had for the moment escaped me."

Then I shall have to consider whether I should stop in the middle of the crop and dispense with Bhima.

But Bhima said: "No, though I do not usually do it, I promise from now to serve Harijans on the same terms."

Harijan, 15-8-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

275. MORE COBWEBS

A seeker of truth cannot afford to write or speak to please anybody. During my long search after truth in all things which have come my way, I know that I have hardly ever succeeded in convincing all of the correctness of my position regarding the matters then in question. In the matter of Hindi propaganda, if I have displeased certain Muslim friends I have no less displeased Hindu friends. But unless my critics convince me of my error, they should not expect me to change merely because they want me to. Thus a correspondent actually says that although my position is logically and historically correct, I should change it to suit the Muslim critics who would have me either to advocate the adoption of the expression 'Hindi-Urdu' or merely 'Urdu' to denote the same common speech, the objection being not to the speech but the name which it has hitherto carried. Now there is a letter before me which quarrels with my address to the Hindi Prachar Convocation recently held at Bangalore[1] from another standpoint. It is a long letter from which I quote below the most relevant extracts:

> In your convocation address at Bangalore you have asked the 11 million men and women of Karnatak to learn Hindi in order to establish contact with them. You have not even restricted the appeal to those who are already educated in the mother tongue Even taking for granted that all are educated in the mother tongue, it is neither possible nor desirable, though possible, nor natural that the masses should learn a language other than their mother tongue Only all-India national workers, business men and other people who come in daily contact with the people of North India can and should learn Hindi. Necessity will make them learn the language even without any propaganda
>
> Though you say that Hindi does not supplant but supplements the provincial languages, in effect it is not so. The bulk of the intellectuals of Tamil Nad today don't think nor even feel in Tamil but in English. They have completely neglected Tamil You can understand to what depths of cultural slavery they have fallen when you

[1] On June 12, 1936; *vide* pp. 51-4.

know that they are even proud of declaring in public meetings and other places that they cannot speak or write well in Tamil but they can do both fluently in English Now some of them have taken to the study of Hindi more with the help of English than with the help of Tamil. The result is going to be the same They will begin to think in Hindi instead of English If a Gujarati tells you that he can write a beautiful essay in Hindi but not in Gujarati, you will be only sorry for him and think that our country is far from attaining *purna* swaraj Many have begun to say in Tamil Nad that they know Hindi better than Tamil

One should not learn any language, even though it be the language of the gods, to the detriment of one's own mother tongue In this connection I used to cite your own example to the Hindi fanatics Though you declare that Hindi is the common language of India you have not written either your *Autobiography* or *Satyagraha in South Africa* in Hindi but in Gujarati. If you had written them in Hindi many more people would have known what you say in your own words. But you preferred to write them in Gujarati Though your teaching and personal example differ in this matter, I hold your action to be correct and proper Therefore I want people to follow not what you say but what you do

Swaraj should not mean the imposition of one language over those who speak different languages. Primary importance ought to be given only to the mother tongue Only secondary importance can be given to Hindi, the common language of India Real inspiration and elevation can come only through the mother tongue

Let me come to the question of script In *Harijan* dated 4-5-1935, writing on the resolution passed by the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan held at Indore you show a partiality for the Urdu script which passes my understanding In your convocation address at Bangalore also you show the same partiality for the Urdu script You want to destroy the scripts of all Indian languages derived from or largely influenced by Sanskrit and substitute Devanagari for them for the sake of those who want to learn the various languages You want to preserve the two scripts, Devanagari and Urdu, for one and the same language spoken by Hindus and Muslims. Others, who also number millions and who have the misfortune of speaking different languages, should allow their scripts to be destroyed and displaced by Devanagari, learn Hindi-Hindustani and also learn Urdu script in order to understand and come into contact with 130 million Hindus and 70 million Muslims! Does this not sound ridiculous and represent the highest form of tyranny? The logical conclusion of this policy would inevitably be the abolition of all languages except Hindi with both of its scripts, for the

Devanagari script would have been adopted for all the languages, all would have learnt Hindi and all the important works in the mother tongue would have been translated in[to] Hindi I want you to reflect for a moment whether this consummation would be desirable in the best interests of India, our common land of birth. Before you propose to destroy the various scripts, should you not attempt to destroy one of the scripts, Devanagari and Urdu, for one and the same language? Why should Muslims and Hindus speaking the same language use two different scripts?

I do not know that I asked all 11 million men and women of Karnatak to learn Hindi-Hindustani. I should be more than satisfied if all those who ever have to come in contact with the people from the North would learn Hindi-Hindustani. But I would certainly not only not deplore, as my correspondent would have me to, on the contrary I would welcome, all people of all the non-Hindi provinces learning Hindi. Why is it not desirable or natural for all India to know an all-India speech *in addition to* every province knowing its own language and in addition knowing All-India speech? Why should such knowledge be the privilege of the cultured few and not of the masses? It will surely show a very high degree of culture for a whole nation of over 300 million souls to know two languages. That such an event is highly improbable is unfortunately too true.

What, however, would be most unfortunate would be for any province to neglect its own language and to prefer another speech as the correspondent complains is happening in Tamil Nad. My frequent travels in Tamil Nad have confirmed the opinion expressed by my correspondent. But latterly I have noticed a change for the better in that province. And the process of preferring the provincial speech to every other where the choice is possible will be hastened without an effort as the educated in every province recognize more and more the necessity of seeking and establishing contact with the masses.

The correspondent incidentally touches the eternal rivalry between English and Hindi-Hindustani to be the common speech. I have held and declared, ever since I have entered public life, the definite opinion that English never can or ought to be the all-India speech and that it can only be Hindi, i.e., Hindustani, the speech spoken by the millions of Hindus and Mussalmans of the North. The attempt to treat English as such is to establish a permanent bar between the masses and the English-educated classes and to retard the progress of the country to its destination. I have repeatedly explained that English

has a definite place in our culture. In order to understand the rulers and the whole Western world and to bring to India the best that the West has to give, a few of us must learn English which is the most widely known speech of the West. But a thousand times more Indians have to know Hindi-Hindustani if the illiterate masses are to be one with the educated classes

The correspondent is wholly ignorant of my opinion when he thinks that I have even been guilty of advising preference for Hindi over the provincial speech. There is no hiatus between my principle and my practice in this connection. I heartily endorse the proposition that primary importance should be given to the mother tongue.

On the question of script my correspondent's fear is justified, nor do I apologize for the opinion I hold. Different languages descended from or intimately connected with Sanskrit ought to have one script and that is surely Devanagari. Different scripts are an unnecessary hindrance to the learning by the people of one province the language of other provinces. Even Europe which is not one nation has generally adopted one script. Why should India, which claims to be and is one nation, not have one script? I know I am inconsistent when I tolerate both Devanagari and Urdu scripts for the same language. But my inconsistency is not quite foolish. There is Hindu-Muslim friction at the present moment. It is wise and necessary for the educated Hindus and Muslims to show mutual respect and toleration to the utmost extent possible. Hence the option for Devanagari or Urdu scripts. Happily there is no friction between provinces and provinces. Hence the desirability of advocating a reform which means a closer knitting together of provinces in more ways than one. And let it be remembered that the vast mass of the people are wholly illiterate. It would be suicidal to impose on them different scripts for no other reason than a false sentiment and laziness to think.

Harijan, 15-8-1936

276. *VARNA* v. *CASTE*

Shri Sant Ramji, of the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal of Lahore, wants me to publish the following.

I have read your remarks[1] about Dr Ambedkar and the Jat-Pat-Torak Mandal, Lahore In that connection I beg to submit as follows.

We did not invite Dr Ambedkar to preside over our conference because he belonged to the Depressed Classes, for we do not distinguish between a touchable and an untouchable Hindu. On the contrary our choice fell on him simply because his diagnosis of the fatal disease of the Hindu community was the same as ours, i e., he too was of the opinion that caste system was the root cause of the disruption and downfall of the Hindus The subject of the Doctor's thesis for doctorate being caste system, he has studied the subject thoroughly. Now the object of our conference was to persuade the Hindus to annihilate caste, but the advice of a non-Hindu in social and religious matters can have no effect on them The Doctor in the supplementary portion of his address insisted on saying that that was his last speech as a Hindu, which was irrelevant as well as pernicious to the interests of the conference. So we requested him to expunge that sentence, for he could easily say the same thing on any other occasion But he refused and we saw no utility in making merely a show of our function In spite of all this, I cannot help praising his address which is, as far as I know, the most learned thesis on the subject and worth translating into every vernacular of India

Moreover I want to bring to your notice that your philosophical difference between caste and varna is too subtle to be grasped by people in general, because for all practical purposes in the Hindu society caste and- varna are one and the same thing, for the function of both of them is one and the same, i e , to restrict intercaste marriages and inter-dining Your theory of *varnavyavastha* is impracticable in this age and there is no hope of its revival in the near future But Hindus are slaves of caste and do not want to destroy it So when you advocate your ideal or imaginary *varnavyavastha* they find justification for clinging to caste Thus you are doing a great disservice to social reform by advocating your imaginary utility of division of varnas, for it creates hindrance in our way. To try to remove untouchability

[1] *Vide* pp 134-6

without striking at the root of *varnavyavastha* is simply to treat the outward symptoms of a disease or to draw a line on the surface of water. As in the heart of their hearts *dwijas*[1] do not want to give social equality to the so-called touchable and untouchable Shudras, so they refuse to break caste, and give liberal donations for the removal of untouchability, simply to evade the issue. To seek the help of the Shastras for the removal of untouchability and caste is simply to wash mud with mud.

The last paragraph of the letter surely cancels the first. If the Mandal rejects the help of the Shastras, they do exactly what Dr. Ambedkar does, i.e., cease to be Hindus. How then can they object to Dr. Ambedkar's address merely because he said that that was his last speech as a Hindu? The position appears to be wholly untenable especially when the Mandal, for which Shri Sant Ram claims to speak, applauds the whole argument of Dr Ambedkar's address.

But it is pertinent to ask what the Mandal believes if it rejects the Shastras. How can a Muslim remain one if he rejects the Quran, or a Christian remain Christian if he rejects the Bible? If caste and varna are convertible terms and if varna is an integral part of the Shastras which define Hinduism, I do not know how a person who rejects caste, i.e., varna can call himself a Hindu.

Shri Sant Ram likens the Shastras to mud. Dr. Ambedkar has not, so far as I remember, given any such picturesque name to the Shastras. I have certainly meant it when I have said that if the Shastras support the existing untouchability I should cease to call myself a Hindu. Similarly, if the Shastras support caste as we know it today in all its hideousness, I may not call myself or remain a Hindu since I have no scruples about inter-dining or intermarriage. I need not repeat my position regarding the Shastras and their interpretation. I venture to suggest to Shri Sant Ram that it is the only rational and correct and morally defensible position and it has ample warrant in Hindu tradition.

Harijan, 15-8-1936

[1] The twice-born

277. LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 16, 1936

CHI. MANILAL, SUSHILA,

I have your letters. There is no need at all for you to come here if you are happy where you are. No matter where we are we should render whatever services we can, and regard the people wherever we are as members of our own family The true meeting is that of hearts, and they are quite close though we are millions of miles apart. If the hearts of two prisoners in the same cell are not one their physical proximity is meaningless Hence, I do not long to have you come here to see me. You may live there permanently if you find your peace there.

Now a surprise for you both. Kanti's mind is now set on getting formal education and obtaining a degree. However one may try, he cannot possibly be deterred. I tried hard, but without success Now, the question of the expenses for his education remains. Kanti, too, agrees that it cannot be paid from the public funds and that it would be a crime to take anything from his mother's sisters who have already spent a good deal on him. Hence, either you three brothers should pay his expenses or he must earn and learn. In my opinion, you three should share the burden, which is likely to be Rs 75 to Rs 100 a month, though I do not know about it. It is enough if you give your share of Rs. 33. Start sending the sum if you agree with the proposal.

Manu and Ba are with me. We are getting on quite well.

I got a letter from Harilal, his first after his conversion. He asks for a copy of the Golden Number[1] and wants to see me. I have written[2] to him, saying that he may come provided he agrees to my terms for the visit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati· G N 4856

[1] Of *Indian Opinion*

[2] The letter is not traceable.

278. TELEGRAM TO KASTURBHAI LALBHAI[1]

[On or before *August 17, 1936*][2]

THE NOTICES ARE AGAINST THE PRINCIPLE OF ARBITRATION AND ARE FRAUGHT WITH SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES.

The Bombay Chronicle, 18-8-1936

279. LETTER TO N. R. MALKANI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 17, 1936

MY DEAR MALKANI,

You did well in pouring out your heart to me. You should ignore what others may say. Thakkar Bapa has often made mistakes in judging people. And he writes letters often without careful thinking. But it is idle to expect him at this time of life to change his ways. We must take him as he is and love him for his sacrifice, single-minded devotion to the poor and the oppressed. I never attached any value to his remarks over the visit of the lady. It was undoubtedly wrong to have written at all about the incident and written in the way he did.

You did well in leaving Rukmini in Sind. You will have to be firm with her for her own sake. She must not be allowed to make life miserable or interfere with your work.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 919

[1] President of the Mill-owners' Association. According to *The Bombay Chronicle* the telegram was addressed also to Chimanlal Parekh who had put up the wage-cut notices in his mill.

[2] The report bearing the telegram was dated August 17, 1936.

280. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 20, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,

So, you can't be satisfied without letters written by me. You shall have them

You must be composed whatever happens. You should not worry over Kichi's indifferent health. God protects us all and we may not distrust Him when things do not go as we wish or when our dear ones get ill. So I am glad to see that you say you have resigned yourself to God. Let that resignation be from the heart and not merely mechanical For often we utter these truths without their finding a seat in our hearts.

My food is just now milk, pumpkin or any vegetable obtainable in Segaon or surrounding villages, a little garlic and fruit when there is any. I do not find the need for fruit as I used to before.

I hope you have recovered your strength and that Father and Mother are also well.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat C.W. 9609. Courtesy S Ambujammal

281. A LETTER

August 20, 1936

Your letter makes me think. If all the principal relatives have no objection, if . . .[1] is free to retain her own faith and does as a matter of fact retain it, and [her] future partner is likewise and does as a matter of fact retain his own faith and both have equal regard for each other's faith and practices, so far as I can see now, I should have no difficulty in blessing the union.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy. Narayan Desai

[1] Omission as in the source

282. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

August 20, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Could you give Kumi some work at the school or elsewhere, if I arranged an allowance of Rs. 15 a month for her from this place? To put the question differently, does she in your opinion have the disposition to be entrusted with some work?

Will a copy of the *Gita* with the words split up and with their meanings, do for Purushottam and Vijaya? They had asked for only a Sanskrit text. I now learn that there is such an edition in large type and with meanings There will of course be no difficulty in getting the bare Sanskrit text.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati: M M.U /II. Also C W 8502. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

283 LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 21, 1936

CHI PRABHA,

A letter from you after many days. I had been waiting for it day after day. I very well understand the reason why you could not write It would be enough to write out a postcard when under such a stress. Who am I to worry on your account? And after all how would my worrying avail? God alone worries and protects us all. May you have the faith that He is the Lord of every breath we take! Everything will then go well. Otherwise you are being fully put to the test and you are sure to pass it. Do nothing beyond your capacity. Do manage to take milk and fruit. You will not then have to worry about the rest of your food. Who stays there? This is all I am writing today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 3480

284. LETTER TO H. L SHARMA

August 21, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

. . .[1] Give me the full title of Babbitt's book. You may not mind the loss of the book but I cannot help feeling upset till it is found. How can a book disappear like this? And the same goes for the khadi. However, I do not feel as bad about it as about the loss of Babbitt. I still hope I shall find it.

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]

Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh, p. 260

285. A LETTER[2]

[Before *August 22, 1936*]

I see that you do not know the origin of the word 'Harijan' as applied to the so-called untouchables. Hindu literature and, so far as I know, even Christian literature is full of the idea that the despised of the earth are favoured children of God; and so we have a proverb in daily use which means that God is the help of the helpless. Who could be better fitted to be called Harijans in this sense than the millions whom the insolence of men has made the outcastes of society? It would be a different thing if the untouchables themselves said, 'We are Harijans because we are without sin'—but can any man born of woman say 'I am

[1] Omission as in the source

[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" The addressee, a missionary, had enquired. "Does it not indicate that to be really and truly Harijans we must have the experience of a new birth, a spiritual regeneration, which the ordinary man can have no very great understanding of, so long as he is in the unregenerate state? Instead of designating the poor villagers who are still 'dead in trespasses and sins' as 'sons of God', would it not be better to call them all men and women who might become true sons of God?"

without sin', whether he has experienced what you call 'new birth' or not ?

Harijan, 22-8-1936

286. DISCUSSION WITH A PANDIT[1]

[Before *August 22, 1936*]

A Pandit was one of the visitors to Segaon the other day He was introduced as one learned in the Shastras and as one who gave regular discourses on the *Gita* Gandhiji asked him if untouchability had the sanction of the *Gita* It seemed to depend, according to him, on how one defined an untouchable He said.

An untouchable is he who thinks evil thoughts, speaks foul language, does evil deeds Such a one would be an untouchable according to the *Gita*.

But at that rate every one of us would be an untouchable. Who is there amongst us who is without sin? Let me ascertain. Tukde Maharaj, are you without sin?

No, by no means

Then, Khan Saheb, what about you?

The same thing Who can claim to be perfect?

Which means that we are all untouchable. Anyway, it is better that we regard ourselves as less pure than others, for we know ourselves better than we do others, and we may judge none. That is why saint Surdas sang: "There is none so wicked and base as I."

"But then one needs the help of the Shastras to purge oneself of evil thoughts?" said the Pandit.

Yes, but I refuse to accept the authority of a Shastra which supports untouchability, i.e., which condemns a certain class of people, by reason of their birth, as untouchable. Such a Shastra, far from purging us of sin, adds to our load of sin.

Harijan, 22-8-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

287. DISCUSSION WITH A SADHU[1]

[Before *August 22, 1936*]

Another sadhu, a leader of the Harijans, one day came in with a curious poser: "How can we serve God when we do not know God?"

[GANDHIJI.] We may not know God, but we know His creation. Service of His creation is the service of God.

But how can we serve the whole of God's creation?

We can but serve that part of God's creation which is nearest and best known to us. We can start with our next-door neighbour. We should not be content with keeping our courtyard clean, we should see that our neighbour's courtyard is also clean. We may serve our family, but may not sacrifice the village for the sake of the family. Our own honour lies in the preservation of that of our own village. But we must each of us understand our own limitations. Our capacity for service is automatically limited by our knowledge of the world in which we live. But let me put it in the simplest possible language. Let us think less of ourselves than of our next-door neighbour. Dumping the refuse of our courtyard into that of our neighbour is no service of humanity but disservice. Let us start with the service of our neighbours.

Harijan, 22-8-1936

288. A DANGEROUS PROPOSAL

Rao Bahadur Rajah has rendered public service by publishing the correspondence between himself and Dr. Moonje.[2] There was no breach of confidence in the publication. Privilege of confidence is surely not available for proposals which the receiver may regard to be dangerous or harmful to a cause as the Moonje-Ambedkar proposal most undoubtedly is. That neither Dr. Moonje nor Dr. Ambedkar regards his proposal as dangerous does not make it less so in the estimation of those who disapprove of it. What else was R. B. Rajah to do if he intended by all legitimate

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] *Vide* "Letter to M. C. Rajah", p. 174.

means to thwart it? He entered into correspondence with some of those who were parties to the Yeravda Pact, and when he saw that not one of them favoured the proposal he promptly released the correspondence for publication. One may hope that we have seen the last of any bargaining between Dr. Ambedkar and *savarna* Hindus for the transfer to another form of several million dumb Harijans as if they were chattels.

The Pact is between one large section of Hindus and another. It frustrated the attempt to cut the Hindu body into two and gave the opportunity to *savarna* Hindus to make reparation to those millions whom they had ill-treated for centuries

Dr Ambedkar wants to scourge the *savarna* Hindus as he has every right to do, but he may not expect the latter to be party to it. He has every right to be impatient. But prejudices and superstitions centuries old do not die in a moment. No one who has at all cared to study the reform movement will deny that every attempt humanly possible has been and is being made to bring home to the *savarna* Hindus the message of the anti-untouchability movement. If Dr Ambedkar's proposal were accepted, the reform movement would receive a setback which might mean death to it in the end For it contemplates a paper but legal transfer of Harijans from the Hindu fold to some other, no matter by what name the latter is called. It must mean fratricide. Harijans themselves will be cut up into two rival sections, and if they are both classified as Harijans within the meaning of the Pact their state then will be worse than it is today, and it will be an evil day for unhappy India if such a calamity descends on her.

It is futile to argue that although there will be a nominal change of religion, there won't be a real one, and if there is any, it would not be so bad as if Harijans were called Christians or Muslims. If it is a change of religion, it matters little under what label they are classified. Only if they are said to belong to another religion and still remain Harijans, an additional cause of internecine quarrel would be created; and all this to satisfy the desire to punish *savarna* Hindus. If in his anger or impatience Dr. Ambedkar refuses to see the obvious result, surely Dr. Moonje ought to.

And who are we, the self-constituted leaders, to barter away the religious freedom of Harijans? Has not every Harijan, however dull or stupid he may be, the right to make his own choice? It is one thing for Dr Ambedkar and those who wish to change over to some other religion to do so, and wholly another for political or other parties to assume such change for the mass of Hari-

jans and to base thereon legal and other consequences of a far-reaching character.

If the leaders of different religions in India ceased to compete with one another for enticing Harijans into their fold, it would be well for this unfortunate country. I have the profound conviction that those who are engaged in the competition are not serving the cause of religion. By looking at it in terms of politics or economics they reduce the religious values, whereas the proper thing would be to estimate politics and every other thing in terms of religion Religion deals with the science of the soul. Great as the other forces of the world are, if there is such a thing as God soul force is the greatest of all. We know as a matter of fact that the greater the force the finer it is Hitherto electricity has held the field among the finer physical powers. And yet nobody has seen it except through its wonderful results Scientific speculation dares to talk of a force finer even than that of electricity. But no instrument devised by man has been able to know anything positive of soul force or spiritual force It is on that force that the true religious reformer has hitherto relied and never without hope fulfilled. It is that force which will finally govern the welfare of Harijans and everyone else and confound the calculations of men however gifted they may be intellectually. The reformer who has entered upon the duty of ridding Hinduism of the disease of untouchability has to depend in everything he does on that force and nothing else.

Harijan, 22-8-1936

289. *LETTER TO MEHERCHAND AHLUWALIA*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 22, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

My agreement is general. I have never advocated nor do I now advocate class war or class hatred. I do not believe the former to be inevitable But I have never said nor believed that capitalist help is necessary for the Congress cause

Yours sincerely,

SHRI MEHERCHAND AHLUWALIA
RAJPURA
N. W. R.

From a copy Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

290. LETTER TO MEHRABEHN ZABWALA

August 22, 1936

DEAR SISTER,

I have your nice letter. There is no direct relation between Harijan workers and khadi. Even those who wear foreign clothes can serve Harijans. Therefore keep on doing social work without paying any heed to the criticism.

But you are also a devotee of *Daridranarayana. Daridranarayana* means thousands of starving villagers. Those who serve them can certainly bear the weight of khadi. It is enough that you do all that is possible for you. May I give you one suggestion? You are able to spin very fine yarn. If you do that you can get a very light sari made for five or six rupees. Many poor women do the same.

From a copy of the Gujarati: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

291. LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 23, 1936

BAPA,

I do not remember the talks regarding the Sevak Mandal of South India. For the present at least, I form an opinion about each situation as and when it is represented to me. I see no objection if deserving workers can be found for the South India Mandal and the expenses are met from the South itself. The centre cannot give any aid

I hope Amtul Salaam is not, on the whole, a source of worry to you. She is preparing to return. You have to accept payment from here for Nilam's expenses. The burden is not to be thrown on you there. Most probably Jamnalalji will pay her expenses or as a last resort my purse is always there.

Valunjkar will need more money. I have already written to you to accept his *hundi*. He has been working under my supervision and consults me in all matters.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1165

292. LETTER TO N. C. KELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 24, 1936

DEAR MR. KELKAR,

I am late acknowledging your letter.

Do you not think your statement[1] was based on very flimsy evidence? You might have referred Swami Satyadev's article to me for confirmation If I had the time I would love to enter into correspondence with him and find out the names of parties to whom I was supposed to be talking. But I have neither the time nor the inclination to pursue the matter any further Truth stands.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat C W. 3119 Courtesy Kashinath N Kelkar

293. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 24, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

Timè only to send you love in abundance for two wires. Thank God thumb well

TYRANT

From the original. C W 3735. Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N. 6891

294. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

August 24, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Here is Sitaram Sastri's letter for you to deal with. You forgot the sandals. I wonder if you got your own pair. If not, you should procure a pair there or write to Valunjkar at once.

[1] *Vide* "Letter to N C Kelkar", p 203.

I hope you are well and well settled.[1] I am looking forward to your first letter after settling down to the new life. Do not make any time-table.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. C W 6362 Courtesy: Mirabehn Also G N 9828

295. LETTER TO B. G. KHER

August 24, 1936

MY DEAR KHER,

Having little time, I have delayed acknowledging your important letter[2] This is no question of anybody becoming a Buddhist. The temple is meant to be one dedicated to Buddha as temples are dedicated to Rama, Krishna and the like. There is no proselytizing taint about this movement At the most it is to be a Hindu temple of an advanced type in which a very learned man will be keeper or *pujari*. That is how I have understood the whole scheme of Prof Kosambi. You may share this with the Professor, and if he endorses my position, with Shri Natarajan, so that there may be a common understanding about the temple

Yours sincerely,
M. K GANDHI

From a copy C W 7977 Courtesy G D Birla

296 LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

August 24, 1936

CHI. MANILAL, SUSHILA,

I have your letters to me and have also read the one to Kishorelal. The idea of having share-holders does not seem right.

[1] The addressee had moved to Betul

[2] Wherein the addressee had written: "Shri Dharmanand Kosambi told me that you would like to look into the way the amount given by Birlaji for the Naigaum Vihar is spent I will do so; until the building is ready I shall see to the application of this amount. Thereafter I do not know what I could do, being today identified with the Harijan Seva Sangh. How am I to work on a Buddhist Vihar committee? Are they all going to become Buddhists? Where is the need? . ."

Where there is a field ready for share-holders, one for customers and expert workers can well be assumed. Having share-holders does not mean having subscribers or expert workers In my opinion, there may be difficulty in getting men in spite of a flow of funds. Plainly speaking, the subscribers to *Indian Opinion* are not exactly its readers but rather patrons. This is a pitiable situation. You should stop running around and find another honest trade which can support both of you You may pay the loss in running *Indian Opinion* or those who desire its continuance should give a guarantee to bear the loss. You should close down *Indian Opinion* if this cannot be done The insistence on continuing it could be right only up to a point. You ought to have the ability to support yourself by means of some other trade in case *Indian Opinion* cannot run You should also be equipped to support yourself solely on agriculture You ought to think over all this patiently Very little help can be had through exchange of ideas across this distance. You alone know the present condition there It may, however, be right to inform me before taking a final decision. If there is no time for it there is no harm in deciding independently. In any case do observe these conditions:

(1) Incur no debts.
(2) Transact no business on credit.
(3) Take up no business in forbidden goods such as selling *bidis*.
(4) Don't engage in a business to get rich quickly.

I am pained to read about Sorabji Sheth Rustomji's fears about him seem to be proving true. After all things must go the destined way and one's understanding follows the same way.

Perhaps I have already written to you about Kanti, who too is drawn into the current of examinations and degrees. He would not be satisfied without it. Now I recollect that I even asked you to help him.[1] It seems Devdas has offered him some help which would reach here in two or three days when I expect to learn more about it. Ramdas writes to say that he will not be able to help.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4857

[1] *Vide* p. 227.

297. A DISCUSSION WITH MAURICE FRYDMAN[1]

[On or before *August 25, 1936*][2]

[GANDHIJI.] So that is Frydman. You have come to study the spinning-wheel. But you will not win the Rs. 100,000 prize, as the prize has been withdrawn.

[Maurice Frydman] joined heartily in the laughter and said, "Oh, no, I do not want the prize, my only aim is to give you the wheel you want."

He again asked a number of questions about the wheel, discussed various improvements and left for Wardha.[3]

He inquired if Gandhiji's aim was just humanitarian in sitting down in the village, just serving the villagers as best he could!

I am here to serve no one else but myself, to find my own self-realization through the service of these village folk. Man's ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities, social, political, religious, have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God. The immediate service of all human beings becomes a necessary part of the endeavour simply because the only way to find God is to see Him in His creation and be one with it. This can only be done by service of all. And this cannot be done except through one's country. I am part and parcel of the whole, and I cannot find Him apart from the rest of humanity. My countrymen are my nearest neighbours. They have become so helpless, so resourceless, so inert that I must concentrate on serving them. If I could persuade myself that I should find Him in a Himalayan cave, I would proceed there immediately. But I know that I cannot find Him apart from humanity.

But some comforts may be necessary even for man's spiritual advancement. One could not advance himself by identifying himself with the discomfort and squalour of the villager?

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". Maurice Frydman was a Polish engineer, interested in village reconstruction movement, who had met Gandhiji earlier at Nandi Hill. He was given the name Bharatanand.

[2] According to the source the discussion took place on a Tuesday. The Tuesday before 29-8-1936 fell on 25-8-1936.

[3] The discussion which follows took place on a subsequent visit.

A certain degree of physical harmony and comfort is necessary, but above a certain level it becomes a hindrance instead of help. Therefore the ideal of creating an unlimited number of wants and satisfying them seems to be a delusion and a snare. The satisfaction of one's physical needs, even the intellectual needs of one's narrow self, must meet at a certain point a dead stop, before it degenerates into physical and intellectual voluptuousness. A man must arrange his physical and cultural circumstances so that they do not hinder him in his service of humanity, on which all his energies should be concentrated

What then was the secret of his concentration on the village?

I have been saying that if untouchability stays, Hinduism goes; even so I would say that if the village perishes, India will perish too. It will be no more India Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is possible only when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as the problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines and tools that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation of others.

Harijan, 29-8-1936

298. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 25, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

WIRE EXACT CONDITION BODY INCLUDING THUMB AS MEDICALLY CERTIFIED. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original· C W 3736. Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G.N 6892

299. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

August 25, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

What have you done? Shummy says you "return an ill woman" and naturally he says he "feels very disappointed all round". You shall not be cross with him for having told the truth. The wire distresses me. What could be wrong with you? I have sent you a peremptory wire.

I hope you will not leave me in suspense and will give me a faithful report. Why is Shummy disappointed *all round*? You will enlighten me. You told me not to write to Shummy. But I could not ignore the wire. I have sent him a brief note[1].

I do hope there is nothing seriously wrong with you. More when I know the whole truth.

Yes, Mira left for Betul yesterday and Puri[2] occupies her hut.

Your corners are vacant! And the bathroom? All the play-things gone! But how can you return to me if you cannot keep good health here?

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

You dare send me a blank sheet when you leave not a blank corner on your written sheet!

B.

From the original C.W. 3737 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G.N. 6893

[1] This is not trac
[2] Anant Ram Pu

300. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

August 25, 1936

CHI. MARY,

Your letter[1] does you credit and draws me nearer to you if that is possible. We do need to have scrupulous regard for truth. The fact is that I inquired only to know whether you were disturbed. I did not want you to respond to the bell. Even for the few who are with me in Segaon, I am not rigid. They are free not to attend the morning prayer The moral is never do anything to please people, even the dearest, unless the doing of it pleases you also. This broad proposition does raise side issues. But you know what I mean

Give my love to Moti. I am glad she likes her life there. I hope she is keeping quite well.

Mira has gone. Let us hope she will be comfortable there. If she is not, she must return. I could easily have sent her to another but a distant place. She was disinclined to go far.

Mahadev will be inquiring about cargo boats.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat. G N. 6067 Also C W 3397 Courtesy. F Mary Barr

301. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

August 25, 1936

CHI. BRAJKISHAN,

The replies to your letters have been overdelayed. The reason is nothing but lack of time. Even today I am writing just at bedtime.

You ask me who lives with me The three were already here. Among others are Ba, Manu and Khan Saheb. I stop those whom I can from coming here. What do we stand to gain by allowing you to come? You never keep well here.

[1] In this the addressee had written that she had told Gandhiji "practically an untruth" when she had given an excuse for not getting up for prayer at Segaon while she had not intended to get up at all.

Give up the village industries work if you cannot find any help.

But do write to me if you do not keep well there.

BAPU

[PS.]

I had not finished my letter with this. I wrote the last sentence half asleep, the pen slipped out of my hand and I promptly fell asleep. I am now writing this after I awoke from my nap and had some hot water. This is no sign of any ailment or weakness; if at all, it is a sign of good health Give up the longing to live with me and live there or at any other place where you can engage yourself in some occupation and earn not more than you spend. Why not join some khadi bhandar? Or go to live at Narela and work with the help of others It is not good to sit idle. Consult Devdas. Take it that the reason you attribute to my not writing is an utter impossibility. How can I ever forget you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G N 2445

302. LETTER TO R. S. PANDIT

WARDHA,
August 26, 1936

CHI. RANJIT,

Why are you keeping indifferent health? Sarup writes that now you are a little better. You must make your body as strong as steel even if it requires some effort. One can certainly make a boat to cross the Ganga. The real achievement would be to make a boat to cross the waters of slavery. But you cannot do this with a hollow chest. You should be strong enough not to let the oar slip from your hands.

From a copy of the Gujarati. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy. Pyarelal

303. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

[Before *August 27, 1936*][1]

DEAR DAUGHTER,[2]

I have your two letters. You ought to have faith in what Dr. Bharadwaj tells you. Dr. Ansari would have done the same. You are therefore going to clean your nose and carry out whatever else he has recommended.

I am enclosing Nilam's letter[3]. I would certainly have sent for you had it not been for Nilam's illness. I shall show both your letters to Kanti and shall permit him to go if he wishes. I also do not like the step he proposes to take, but I do not wish to suppress him either.

I have no more time now, so I stop here.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 603

304. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
August 27, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA WEST

YOUR WIRE. THANK GOD. WIRE CONDITION DAILY. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original. C.W. 3738 Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6894

[1] From the reference to Kantilal Gandhi's proposed visit to the addressee, *vide* letter to the addressee, p 246.

[2] This is in Urdu

[3] This is not available.

305. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Let me see what great feat you perform, now that Kanti has gone there Do not pick quarrels. Persuade him sweetly if you wish to. As far as I can tell, it is now impossible to stop him.

Carry out Dr Bharadwaj's instructions While you have been advising others, you yourself need to look after your own health. Do not expect any long letter from me for some time now

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N 343

306. LETTER TO PARIKSHITLAL L. MAJMUDAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August [27, 1936][1]

BHAI PARIKSHITLAL,

I have your letter. You should clearly write so to Bapa if you feel that he has made a mistake. I wrote to him nothing since I had not read everything fully. However, I am quite aware that a judge's function is over with the delivery of his decision, and that he is not even entitled to interpret his judgment However, I have not written to Bapa even to say that if both the parties approach him again with a representation he might take it up, because I am so much immersed in work that many such things are left out. You may send this to Bapa if you now write to him. Now that I have written so much to you I feel like writing to him also, but where is the time?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 4037

[1] From the G.N. Register

307. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[About *August 27, 1936*][1]

CHI. PRABHA,

You must have got my letter to the Sitab Diyara address though you have gone to Patna. Now obtain milk and fruit there and improve your health. Look after the household properly. You have now the opportunity to take full care of Jayaprakash's food. I do not write here about your questions since I have replied to them earlier in detail Tell me about the house you live in and about other things I should know How is the climate, for example? Do take regular walks My weight as recorded yesterday was 109 lb

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Mahadevi and others have returned from Badrinarayan. Nilam, one of the party who fell ill, is with Amtul.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 3464

308. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
August 28, 1936

AMTUSSALAAM
SEVAK
DELHI

YOU MUST COMPOSE YOURSELF. GET WELL QUICK. AM LOOKING AFTER KANTI.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N 344

[1] From the reference to Nilam's illness and her stay with Amtussalaam, *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", p 245

309. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
August [*28*][1] *1936*

MY DEAR REBEL,

I am writing this at J.'s in the early morning to catch the train.

I can't give you the assurance that I am without anxiety. How can I be when you act so rebelliously? You were docile in the presence of the tyrant. Behind his back the rebellious spirit breaks out. Therefore the only way to free me from anxiety is for you to get quickly well and, if fish-eating would restore you, you should unhesitatingly take it.

But I can give you this assurance that nothing that Shummy can say will affect me in the least. His great anger is the measure of his love for you. Brought up as he is, he has every right to accuse me of having ruined your health and otherwise disturbed the even tenor of your life. How can he feel otherwise? I had told you that much was to depend upon your returning to Simla in a first-class condition. You did not, you could not We would settle accounts after you have got well and look better than ever before. You would continue to write and wire daily while the illness lasts You must not take up any work till you are completely restored I hope you had my wire[2] yesterday

I came to Wardha yesterday. I walk back this evening.

Mira is returning today from Betul.

Love to you and Shummy.

TYRANT
ROBBER
BAPU, etc.

From the original C W 3584. Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G N. 6393

[1] The source has "29-8-1936", but below it someone has written "Really 28-8-1936", which is confirmed by the postmark.

[1] *Vide* p. 245

310. LETTER TO JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

SEGAON,
August 28, 1936

MY DEAR JAWAHARLAL,

Our conversation of yesterday has set me thinking. Why is it that with all the will in the world I cannot understand what is so obvious to you? I am not, so far as I know, suffering from intellectual decay. Should you not then set your heart on at least making me understand what you are after? I may not agree with you. But I should be in a position to say so. Yesterday's talk throws no light on what you are after. And probably what is true of me is true of some others. I am just now discussing the thing with Raja. I should like you to discuss your programme with him if you can spare the time. I must not write at length, having no time. You know what I mean.

Love.

BAPU

Gandhi-Nehru Papers, 1936. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

311. NOTES

UNCERTIFIED *v.* CERTIFIED

The difficulty that cropped up in the Tamil Nad on the introduction of the new scale of wages for spinning has arisen in other places and specially in Andhra, as appears from several letters I have received from that part of India. Correspondents complain bitterly of the harm uncertified dealers of khadi are doing to the cause of the poor women who have no chance of earning an additional pice. I do not know whether the uncertified dealers will listen to my exhortation not to be so selfish as to snatch the pice from thousands of poor spinners. I hope they will. But the real remedy lies in the hands of the khadi-buying public. If they will not buy khadi except from the bhandars certified by the A. I. S. A., the uncertified bhandars will have to close down. The public should realize that there can be no khadi if

there is no A. I. S. A. Until khadi becomes current coin and has found general favour in the villages, it must be nursed by a vigilant body having the capacity for performing the onerous duty. Such a body is the A. I. S. A. The public know or ought to know that it is a purely philanthropic institution having no interest save that of the millions of poor women spinners of the villages of India. As its name implies, all its activities are intended to subserve their interest. Economic salvation of the villages is impossible, unless the millions of women who have no occupation for nearly six months in the year have a steady and profitable occupation fitted to their constitutions. There is no such universal occupation as hand-spinning. I have been obliged to restate this oft-told truth in order to emphasize the necessity of the public patronizing certified khadi bhandars to the exclusion of uncertified ones, even though the latter sell khadi at less than the Association rates. The public should know that the Association rates alone make it possible to pay higher wages to spinners.

HUTS WITHOUT MONEY

> Last year I had 60 Harijans accommodated in the village of my future abode. The question of building huts for them was ticklish. But it was solved for me by Harijans themselves. When I went to the village a month after their settlement, I found 12 huts already erected evidently without the cost of a pice. The walls were made of palm branches or stalks of *juari*, cotton or *tuver*, the roof of split stalks of *juari*, knitted into *chatais*[1] and those were covered with leaves of *khakhra*. The ropes were made from the fibres of *khakhra* roots.

Thus writes an enthusiastic agriculture graduate who is keen on settling down in a village. Where labour is not exploited and where it has free access to the material that Nature produces in abundance and which is generally allowed to go to waste or sold for a trifle, poor Harijans have no difficulty in getting for themselves comfortable cottages and other amenities of life. But orthodox prejudice makes it a sin or a crime for Harijans to touch even its wells ! ! !

Harijan, 29-8-1936

[1] Mats

312. *LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR*

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 29, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

I hope you got my letter of yesterday I am writing this in Segaon; therefore this can't go by late fee post Your daily telegrams and letters giving cent per cent truth are absolutely necessary for the peace of my mind Why must you send vegetables too? Surely that is repugnant to the village sense Trust me to ask for what I need from you.

There is no hurry about the surgical instruments I can wait till Shummy is himself again. You have to make up your mind to win him back It is sheer nonsense for you to talk of running away from the home It is so unlike you. 'Love is patient and long suffering.' And what are you if not embodiment of love? Your precious association with me is not going to make you less loving and less lovable If you have not been able to give satisfaction to the family by showing better health, surely it is within your power to show an equable mind and a love that will quench the fiercest anger. Do wire to me, that you have reconquered Shummy I tell you the thought of his pain over your illness haunts me all the day long I do not know how I can appease him except by your unmistakably showing him that you have not lost, but if possible gained by your contact with me, in all that counts.

Mira came back yesterday. The appointments in Betul were too dirty for her

Love to both of you.

BAPU

From the original C.W 3585 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6394

313. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
August 30, 1936

MY DEAR AMRIT,

You are good. You are sending me full letters and wires. I needed them all Your letters are also cheerful But whilst I do not worry in the sense you do, I must confess that your illness has given me a rude shock and Shummy's estrangement has proved unbearable. You must walk to his room and stoop to conquer. Bathe him with your tears I want his wire that he has forgiven me from his heart. It hurts me to think that I should be the cause of estrangement between you and him.

Here you were perfect in your obedience. I want you to obey me in this from your heart. Voluntary obedience always carries its own conviction. And I know that your obedience will restore the harmony of the household. The exact method of winning over Shummy I must leave to you.

When you are entirely restored, I shall discuss with you and Shummy, if he is then composed, my own opinion about the cause of your painful collapse.

It may be well for you to reduce the quantity of milk rather than giving up eggs. The heaviness need not be looked for in that direction first. And if the doctor agrees, you should take a little garlic always. I cannot vouch for it but I am inclined to think that onion oil should be good for eczema.

I was not amused over Subhas's fear. There is much truth in what he says. If you were feigning strength however unwittingly, under the impulse of your enthusiasm and your intense love for me, naturally the separation would produce a collapse. You alone could be the judge of the condition, which [you] can fathom by introspection. No more tonight.

Love.

BAPU

From the original C W 3586 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6395

314. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

August 30, 1936

CHI PRABHA,

This time your letter is late. You must fix a day for writing For my part, I have never been lax. I reply to you as soon as I get your letter. Your last letter reached me yesterday and today I am writing this reply. I hear that Jayaprakash is reaching Wardha today. I have not known the reason. Are the letters henceforth to be sent to the new address? Are letters to the *Searchlight* address delayed? How did you get the cough? You should regain your strength quickly if milk is now available.

You should shoulder only as much responsibility as you can bear. One does not have to repent if one takes up service in proportion to one's capacity.

I am just told that Jayaprakash has arrived.

In your letters you make mistakes of gender. I am returning today's with the corrections Ask me if you don't follow them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3481

315. TELEGRAM TO G. D. BIRLA

WARDHA,
August 31, 1936

GHANSHYAMDAS
CARE LUCKY
BOMBAY

COME AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. VALLABHBHAI WAITING FOR YOU. WIRE REPLY.

BAPU

From the original: C.W 7979 Courtesy G D. Birla

316. LETTER TO JAMNALAL BAJAJ

SEGAON,
August 31, 1936

CHI. JAMNALAL,

I forgot to discuss three points with you.

What happened in the case of Babarao Harkare? I think it is good to send him Rs. 25 every month.

If his brother deserves more, he should be paid more.

Shankarrao Tikekar seems to be in a pitiable plight. A summons to pay Rs. 1,500 has been served on him, and he is unemployed. Have you thought of doing anything for him?

You are better placed to think over all these matters.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 2983

317. A TALK[1]

[Before *September 2, 1936*][2]

It was interesting one morning to watch a number of urchins collected in the verandah of Gandhiji's hut . . . Their eyes were fixed on a snake in a glass jar . . . Though the place cannot . . . be said to be infested with snakes, a fair number of snakes are to be found there during the season. There must therefore be a fair number of cases of snake-bites, and in all cases the villagers kill the snakes at sight. Explaining the presence of the exhibit Gandhiji said:

That is hardly proper or necessary. We cannot tell a poisonous from a non-poisonous snake and therefore we kill all without discrimination. The bulk of them are non-poisonous, and in many cases it is the fright that kills the victim of snake-bite. The snakes have their place in the agricultural economy of the village, but our villagers do not seem to realize it. They perform a particular-

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] This and the subsequent interviews evidently took place before Gandhiji was hospitalized on September 2, 1936.

ly useful function, in that they clear the fields of rats, vermin and other pests. It is best therefore to know the elementary principles of snake-lore and to teach them to the villagers. They must know how to distinguish between a poisonous and a non-poisonous snake, they must know that it is not necessary to kill all snakes, which although they may be poisonous do not usually bite unless they are trodden upon or mishandled, and they must also know that certain snakes at least are useful With that purpose in view I have decided to have here snakes alive or dead to be shown to the villagers. This one in the jar was caught alive by an inmate of our household. We have a simple device with which it is easy to catch snakes alive without doing them physical injury, and this one was found clinging to a roof in the farmyard over there. I decided to send it on to the Civil Surgeon for examination. He was good enough to examine it He found that it was a Krait, one of the most poisonous varieties, and so he killed it and sent it back I decided to preserve it and sent for a glass jar with rectified spirit. We had to wait several hours for the jar to come, and when it did come we found on opening the basket that the snake was alive. It seems to be particularly tenacious of life, and so it lingered on until the third day, when we decided to end its pains by immersing it in water The fact was that the Civil Surgeon had smashed its brain and stunned it, and as he explained later, its spinal cord was intact and therefore it had remained alive. I have now got a cage to keep live specimens in As you see, the little urchins are already being attracted. I have begun to study snake-lore and hope to place before the villagers the broad facts regarding these creatures.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

318 DISCUSSION WITH TEACHERS[1]

[Before *September 2, 1936*]

A group of school teachers went to Segaon one morning with that old Platonic problem—Knowledge is virtue—and asked if it was true Why was it that though we knew very well indeed that a particular course of action was morally wrong, we could not avoid it? Replying to them Gandhiji said

Human life is a series of compromises and it is not always easy to achieve in practice what one has found to be true in

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

theory. Take this very simple case. The principle is that all life is one and we have to treat the sinner and the saint alike, as the *Gita* says we have to look with an equal eye on a learned pundit and a dog and a dog-eater. But there I am. Though I have not killed the snake, I know I have been instrumental in killing it. I know that I should not have done so. I know, besides, that snakes are *kshetrapals* (guardians of the field), and therefore too I should not have helped in killing it. But as you see I have not been able to avoid it. But it is no use my thinking that I cannot avoid it. I do not give up the principle which is true for all time that all life is one, and I pray to God that He may rid me of the fear of snakes and enable me to achieve the non-violence necessary to handle snakes as we handle other domestics. Take another instance, again a very simple one. I know that as a villager and as one who has made it his business to promote village crafts, I must use a village-made razor, but you see that I am using a foreign one.[1]

I might have got a village-made razor, if I had written to friends to procure one for me. But I thought I must help the village barber, no matter what kind of razor he used. I therefore decided to cultivate him, and put up with his dirty clothes and uncouth instruments. But on one thing I could not possibly compromise. He said he would not shave Harijans on the same terms as he was prepared to shave me, and I had to do without his services. Now you find me having a shave with a foreign razor, though it is open to me to procure a village-made one. Here there is obviously an indefensible compromise. And yet there is an explanation. I have been sticking on to a set of shaving tackle given me by a loving sister, whose gift I could not resist and whose feelings I could not hurt by rejecting the foreign razor and insisting on having a village-made one. But there it is, the compromise is there. I do not commend it for imitation. We must be prepared to displease the dearest ones for the sake of principles.

There are eternal principles which admit of no compromise, and one must be prepared to lay down one's life in the practice of them. Supposing someone came and asked you to give up your religion and to embrace another at the point of the sword, would you do it? Supposing someone were to compel you to drink wine or eat beef, or tell a lie, would you not rather lay down your life than yield to the coercion? No. A principle is a principle, and in no case can it be watered down because of our

[1] Gandhiji was having a shave when the teachers arrived.

incapacity to live it in practice. We have to strive to achieve it, and the striving should be conscious, deliberate and hard. Has not our Poet sung for all time that fearless striving is the the very condition of freedom?

> Where the mind is without fear, and the head is held high; . . .
> Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection; . . .
> Into that heaven of freedom, Oh Father, let my country awake[1]

Harijan, 5-9-1936

319. TALK WITH BHARATAN KUMARAPPA[2]

[Before *September 2, 1936*]

I have no heart in this correspondence, no zest in it. I am actually tired of it and feel like asking people not to write to me at all I long to wander among the villages around us rather than go to Wardha where so many friends are coming and I may have to go But I feel it a wrench to be torn from my work. It is, if I may call it, my *sadhana*, and I would, if I could, not let anything interrupt it. I have two or three engagements which I accepted long ago and I shall have to keep them, though I would love to find some excuse to put them off or avoid them. I would like to walk out every morning to the villages in our neighbourhood. I am doing practically little physical work now, and I am longing to do it We have taken a couple of cows and are trying the experiment of making our own ghee. Now I should like to look after the cow myself, look after her feed and her general upkeep. My idea is to show these villagers that a cow can easily pay for her feed and the charges of her upkeep. Then look at the number of ailments these villagers suffer from, and how they will try all kinds of quack remedies but will not do the simplest things they must do.

All this is slow work, and it is no use expecting startling results as those of the Five Year Plan in Soviet Russia. We have to realize that we are eating the salt of the poor, and we have to make an adequate return to them. Never mind if you do not get agents for this difficult work If we have only one genuine agent, I should be satisfied Indeed I should not worry even if we had none. Our acid test is: Have we organized any single village

[1] *Gitanjali*, 35
[2] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

according to our programme? Have we introduced food reform there? Are their roads and their lanes clean and perfect? Have we revived any industries? Have we tackled the problem of drink and vice? If we could do this successfully even in one village, I should think we had achieved a good deal. From individuals you may get a response but I should not call it making headway. Making headway is touching one whole village. Jajuji[1] was wondering if we might not have a wider scheme. No, we cannot have it. It is not one item of work like hand-spinning for instance. It is whole-village-work, and today our work centres round three or four things I have mentioned. It may centre round thirty things some day, but not today.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

320. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
September 2, 1936

AMTUL SALAAM
CARE SEVAK
DELHI

YOU CAN GO INDORE PATIALA BOMBAY WARDHA FOR IMPROVING HEALTH. KANTI JOINED VAKIL'S SCHOOL BOMBAY. WHEN BA I DEVDAS DO NOT WORRY IT IS WRONG FOR YOU TO WORRY.

BAPU

From a photostat. G.N. 345

321. MESSAGE TO WORLD PEACE CONGRESS[2]

September 2, 1936

NO INDIAN CAN HELP SYMPATHIZING WITH PEACE EFFORT GOING ON IN WESTERN COUNTRIES.

The Bombay Chronicle, 3-9-1936

[1] Shrikrishnadas Jaju
[2] The message was sent through Sarojini Naidu

322. TELEGRAM TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHAGANJ,
[September][1] *3, 1936*

AMTUL SALAAM
CARE SEVAK
DELHI

SARASWATI GOING TRIVANDRUM MONDAY. COME BEFORE IF POSSIBLE.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 346

323. TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHAGANJ,
September 4, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

YOU MUST BEHAVE YOURSELF AND NOT GRIEVE OVER MY ILLNESS.[2] NO FEVER YET. LOVE.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3739. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6895

[1] From *Bapuke Patra–8: Bibi Amtussalaamke Naam*, p. 90. The original is damaged.

[2] Gandhiji was down with malaria; *vide* also the following item.

324. MESSAGE FOR AMRIT KAUR[1]

September 4, 1936

Tell her she must be content with a letter from you, at least for two or three days. Also tell her my prophecy about the thermos was correct; it is broken, and that she has now to replace it.

From a copy: C.W. 10100. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur

325. GOD OF LOVE, NOT WAR

The Statesman of Delhi has devoted four articles to an unmeasured condemnation of the no-war movement led by Canon Sheppard and other earnest Christians in England. The paper has dragged into its support the authority of the *Bhagavad Gita* in these words:

> Indeed the true but difficult teaching of Christianity seems to be that society must fight its enemies but love them.
>
> Such, too,—will Mr. Gandhi please note—is the clear teaching of the *Bhagavad Gita*, where Krishna tells Arjuna that victory also goes to him who fights with complete fearlessness and is utterly devoid of hatred. Indeed on the highest plane the argument between the conscientious objector and the knightly warrior is for ever settled in the second book of that great classic. We have little space to quote and the whole poem deserves to be read not once but many times.

The writer of the articles perhaps does not know that the terrorist has also used in his defence the very verses quoted by him. But the fact is that a dispassionate reading of the *Bhagavad Gita* has revealed to me a meaning wholly contrary to the one given to it by the *Statesman* writer.

[1] This was conveyed by Mahadev Desai to Amrit Kaur in a letter which, *inter alia*, read "[Gandhiji] deliberately went to the hospital in order that the doctor may not have to be troubled over and over again. He is being properly looked after and is progressing well. There was no fever until 2.30 [p.m.]. Even if it does come, I am sure it will be mild. He is taking complete rest . . ."

He has forgotten that Arjuna was no conscientious objector in the sense the Western war-resisters are. Arjuna believed in war. He had fought the Kaurava hosts many times before. But he was unnerved when the two armies were drawn up in battle array and when he suddenly realized that he had to fight his nearest kinsmen and revered teachers It was not love of man or the hatred of war that had actuated the questioner. Krishna could give no other answer than he did. The immortal author of the *Mahabharata*, of which the *Gita* is one—no doubt the brightest—of the many gems contained in that literary mine, has shown to the world the futility of war by giving the victors an empty glory, leaving but seven victors alive out of millions said to have been engaged in the fight in which unnamable atrocities were used on either side. But the *Mahabharata* has a better message even than the demonstration of war as a delusion and a folly. It is the spiritual history of man considered as an immortal being and has used with a magnifying lens a historical episode considered in his times of moment for the tiny world round him but in terms of present-day values of no significance In those days the globe had not shrunk to a pinhead, as it has today, on which the slightest movement on one spot affects the whole. The *Mahabharata* depicts for all time the eternal struggle that goes on daily between the forces of good and evil in the human breast and in which though good is ever victorious evil does put up a brave show and baffles even the keenest conscience. It shows also the only way to right action.

But whatever the true message of the *Bhagavad Gita* may be, what matters to the leaders of the peace movement is not what the *Gita* says but what the Bible, which is their spiritual dictionary, says and then, too, not what meaning the Church authorities give to it, but what meaning a prayerful reading of it yields to the reader. What matters most of all is the objector's knowledge of the implications of the law of love or ahimsa, inadequately rendered in English as non-violence The articles of *The Statesman* are perhaps a fair challenge to the objectors. I am sorry I do not know enough of the movement to give a definite opinion. My opinion need have no weight whatsoever with the objectors. But it has, inasmuch as I know intimately some of them, who even correspond with me. And now they have gone a step further in that they have adopted almost as their textbook Mr. Richard Gregg's book called *The Power of Non-violence* which is claimed by its author to be a Westen interpretation of what non-violence as I interpret it stands for. It may not therefore be presumptuous on

my part if I set down without argument the implications and conditions of success of non-violence. Here they are:

(1) Non-violence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force

(2) In the last resort it does not avail to those who do not possess a living faith in the God of Love.

(3) Non-violence affords the fullest protection to one's self-respect and sense of honour, but not always to possession of land or movable property, though its habitual practice does prove a better bulwark than the possession of armed men to defend them. Non-violence in the very nature of things is of no assistance in the defence of ill-gotten gains and immoral acts

(4) Individuals or nations who would practise non-violence must be prepared to sacrifice (nations to the last man) their all except honour. It is therefore inconsistent with the possession of other people's countries, i.e., modern imperialism which is frankly based on force for its defence

(5) Non-violence is a power which can be wielded equally by all—children, young men and women or grown-up people—provided they have a living faith in the God of love and have therefore equal love for all mankind. When non-violence is accepted as the law of life it must pervade the whole being and not applied to isolated acts.

(6) It is a profound error to suppose that whilst the law is good enough for individuals it is not for masses of mankind

Harijan, 5-9-1936

326. WHAT A GIRL NEEDS

A fair correspondent writes:[1]

> Your article "Avoidable Misery"[2] seems to me to be incomplete
>
> If parents were to educate their daughters as they educate their sons, so as to enable them to earn an independent living, they would not have to worry themselves over the selection of husbands for their daughters . . When girls have had the opportunity of developing their minds fairly and are able to support themselves in a dignified manner, they have no difficulty, when they are desirous of marrying, in being suitably matched. What I plead for is a training of girls in useful knowledge and some calling that would make them fully

[1] Only excerpts are reproduced here

[2] *Vide* p. 172

confident about their ability to face the world and not to feel dependent upon parents or their future husbands I wish you could emphasize this aspect of the question in considering the difficulties of parents having on their hands daughters of marriageable age!!

I heartily endorse the sentiments expressed by my correspondent. Only I had to deal with the case of a parent who had made himself miserable not because he had an incompetent daughter, but because he and perhaps even his daughter wanted to restrict themselves, in the choice of a husband, to their own little caste The 'accomplishment' of the girl was itself a hindrance in this case. If the girl was illiterate, she could have accommodated herself to any young man. But being an accomplished girl, naturally she would need an equally accomplished husband. It is our misfortune that the sordidness of exacting a price for marrying a girl is not regarded as a decided disqualification. An altogether artificial value is put upon English collegiate education. It covers a multitude of sins If the definition of 'accomplishment' was more sensible than it has become among the classes whose educated young men exact a price for accepting marriage proposals on behalf of girls, the difficulty of selecting suitable matches for girls would be much lessened, if not entirely removed Whilst, therefore, I commend the proposal of my fair correspondent to the attention of parents, I must insist on the necessity of breaking down the highly injurious caste barriers. Breaking down the barriers will widen the range of choice and thus in a great measure prevent exactions.

Harijan, 5-9-1936

327. *TELEGRAM TO AMRIT KAUR*

WARDHAGANJ,
September 5, 1936

RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANORVILLE
SIMLA

COMPLETELY FREE FOR SIXTY HOURS QUITE HAPPY. YOU SHOULD ACCEPT MEMORIAL[1] AGENCY FOR JULLUNDUR ONLY.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3740 Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G.N. 6896

[1] Kamala Nehru Memorial

328 LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

WARDHA,
September 6/7, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

All these few days I was in no mood to play. Hence I had forgotten that you were a Rebel, Idiot, etc , etc Now I am somewhat composed. You have still to send me the news that there is reconciliation between you and Shummy If you have not gone to him, you must do so at once.

I told you I did not like that eruption on the thumb You must not doctor it yourself You should see a competent doctor, if Shummy will not attend to you. Nor can I guide you from here as to your food except in a general way. The bath is all right. You are right in raising its temperature It is enough to have it at least 5 degrees below the temperature of the body

I must tell you later what I consider was the cause of your breakdown. This is being written after 8 p m. So I must not write more.

Mahadev has kept you fully posted about my health. Hence I need say nothing more except that I am A 1.

Please thank Shummy for the book on snakes of which I saw some beautiful live specimens yesterday.

Much love from

ROBBER

September 7, 1936

[PS]

My door can never be shut in your face.

From the original. C W 3587. Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G N 6396

329. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

WARDHA,
September 7, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER,[1]

For three days there has been no temperature and so it can be said that I am rid of the fever. I am writing this from my hospital bed. Kanti's letter accompanies this.

It is not right for you to worry about him Can your relationship be deeper than Ba's and even mine? Can the measure of your love be greater? Be reasonable and calm down.

You do not care to improve your health; this is not good. You must have got my wire[2], but there is no reply from you How cruel you are!

Send me a full report and take a final decision

It is foolish of you to be afraid of a visit to Wardha. However, I don't insist. Go wherever you can improve your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Is Chitre there?

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 347

330 LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 7, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I have been thinking of you every day, only my indifferent health would not let me write to you But I cannot postpone writing today. I have no fever I have written for *Harijan*, so why should I not write to you? I have your letter I was certainly pained beyond measure The edifice of my trust collapsed in a moment. You suddenly drifted away from me. Ba's grief

[1] This is in Urdu
[2] *Vide* p. 258

is greater than mine; and poor A.'s the greatest. You have justified the epithets I gave you. You are a tyrant, you are treacherous You stole A.'s heart and then you spurned her. Can you think of an act of greater cruelty? In your curriculum you will have occasions to drive needles into living beings and dissect them Remember this letter then. You have started your lessons by torturing a living human being. But I am not at all angry at your strange sacrifice. What could you do? How far can you get over your nature? You have been carried away by the current of the prevailing atmosphere as well as by your own mental make-up. This happens more or less to everyone May you be blessed. One thing hurt me very much. In the evening you came to me with a certain resolve. Next day you changed it altogether. You did not even think it necessary to discuss it with me. What kind of conduct is this? Do you regard your own word as absolutely worthless? It was a severe blow. You made me cry so much. You could have desisted from this act without difficulty. Well, one cannot collect spilt water It will be enough if you learn to value your own word after this regrettable episode. Remember knowledge without a moral basis has no worth whatsoever It is like a two-pice bit of copper coated with mercury to look like a rupee.

Take good care of your health. Don't reduce yourself to a skeleton by overwork. Don't exhaust your brain. I have no doubt that you will pass all the tests.

Write to me regularly

I am still in the hospital. The fever may be said to have gone. Mirabehn's bed is by my side. She is still running a temperature. The third patient is Ba who is suffering from cough.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Gujarati C W 10707. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

331. LETTER TO JUGAL KISHORE BIRLA

WARDHA,
September 7, 1936

BHAI JUGAL KISHOREJI,

I was about to have an attack of fever when your letter of 26th August reached me. I am now free from fever but am still confined to the hospital bed. Even then I should write to you. Thinking on objects of sense is a delusion I have not received any divine message. If what I say does not appeal to you, you must never listen to me. If I cannot hope to persuade you by this letter and in my present condition of health, I shall certainly try to do so when we meet. Perhaps I shall succed.

Today I will only say that to me Sikhism is a part of Hinduism But the situation is different from the legal point of view. Dr Ambedkar wants a change of religion. If becoming a Sikh amounts to conversion, then this kind of conversion on the part of Harijans is dangerous. And that too with a stroke of the pen and without the Harijans being consulted Conversion as well as change of community can only be a personal matter. It is not so in this case. If you can persuade the Sikhs to accept that Sikhism is a part of Hinduism and if you can make them give up the separate electorate, then I will have no objection to Harijans calling themselves Ramanujis or Sikhs.

More when I have the time

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

332. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

September 8/9, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I am having good news from you. I got your note just now at seven in the morning. It was painful for me that your hearts could not be one. Not only that, it obstructed our work too. Let us hope that the [harmony][1] now restored will never crack.

[1] Illegible in the source

I understand what you say about Govind. You should visit him and the other patients from time to time.

I am sending the newspaper

Send here the brass barrel for honey which is there, and also the lid of the white metal box to be used in the cooker. The box sent to Radhakisan cannot be put to full use because its lid got mixed up and another came in its place.

Ask Puri to send me a report of his health and his work.

I am having no fever at all and the weakness is disappearing gradually. I am still on milk and fruit. It seems the doctor will take some time to discharge me. Mirabehn had an attack of fever yesterday. She was given a purge She is well now. She too is on milk and fruit.

Ba still has cough, but it looks like subsiding now.

Rajendra Babu, Brajkishore Babu and Jayaprakash are still here. R. Babu and J. are unwell and B. Babu has stayed behind to nurse J

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I have detained Prahlad for the day. The needle will be extracted. We shall know only tomorrow where the needle is lodged.

[*September 9, 1936*]

After all this could not go yesterday. Prahlad is being operated upon just now at 10 o'clock The needle has been located.

At 10.30[1]

Mirabehn and I went to watch the operation. The needle has been extracted. [Prahlad] is all right.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 8598. Also C W 6998 Courtesy Munnalal G Shah

[1] This is in Hindi.

333. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. ŚHAH

September 9, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

I got your letter, but here at the Hospital. Indeed, I forget the other newspapers. Now I can send for them only tomorrow. Today I am sending only *The Bombay Chronicle* and *Harijan*. The lid seems to have been returned to you, if so, send it tomorrow.

Prahlad has been progressing well He asks for food. But today he will be on milk only.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N. 8597 Also C W 6999 Courtesy Munnalal G Shah

334. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

WARDHA HOSPITAL,
September 10, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have had three letters from you which I have acknowledged in my letter to Munnalal I got the letter from Ramniklal too. I have also sent you my congratulations. I hope to reach there probably the day after tomorrow

I am almost recovered.

I do not send for Munnalal now but I shall try to send Dr. Mahodaya. In the mean while he should subsist on milk only. If he does not have clear motions he may take castor oil and at least ten grains of quinine Of course you are looking after him.

Neither Gangabehn's nor Munnalal's letter has reached me Do not send milk for Prahlad or anyone else unless asked for. Prahlad was given milk yesterday as well as today from Maganwadi. He is quite comfortable He will have to stay on for at least ten days. I shall not write to Puri today.

More tomorrow. Two bottles are being [returned][1] today. The rest I shall try to send tomorrow.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G.N. 1886

335. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 10, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I had the physical capacity to write to you all these days. But I have been so busy talking things that I have not been able to do any writing except on Monday. I hope you got my letter[2] written that day.

Now too I am writing this before retiring for the night.

Yes, I had a good letter from Shummy. I do not agree with you that Segaon climate had nothing to do with my malaria. Indeed Segaon is noted for its malarial climate. It is for me to conquer it and not shun it. I hope to be there on Saturday. The plate[3] will be taken tomorrow. It will decide my fate.

Your letters, received with extraordinary regularity, have been a rich treasure. You must not trifle with your eczema or the eruption on the thumb. You *must* put yourself under a competent doctor and do as he tells you. So long as you take eggs, I do not think anybody will insist on your taking meat. I would like you to wire to me saying you have called in skilled assistance. Consult Shummy on the point. You must not be obstinate on the point.

No more just now.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3588 Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6397

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] *Vide* p. 264.
[3] X-ray

336 LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH AND BALWANTSINHA

September 11, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL AND CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have your letter. In any case the Doctor is surely coming today. Moreover, he is from Burhanpur like you Tomorrow he will not come. He may examine the patients, if any, today Prahlad is fine. What you write is likely to have happened to Balwantsinha's letters For my part, I have an impression that I had acknowledged his letter.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 8597 Also C.W. 7000. Courtesy Munnalal G Shah

337. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

September 11, 1936

CHI AMRITLAL,

Who is taking up the responsibility for milk and other things from now on? Send the *khakhari*[1] for Mirabehn if they have prepared it, and butter. Keep the butter being sent herewith and send me another lot. The salt bottle is sent for refilling. Send ten *tolas* of flour, a small griddle, rolling-pin and board if the *khakhari* is not ready. You may send a bill for such of these articles as have to be taken from the new kitchen. Send dal, rice and vegetables for Prahlad. It does not matter if the three are put together.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N. 10719

[1] A thin crisp chapati

338. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

[Before *September 12, 1936*][1]

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I extracted two lovely bits of hair from today's curds besides the ones that I may have swallowed. They were Mother goat's hair. So the carelessness may be traced to the person who strained the milk. The curds were very sour. If the morning milk is curdled, I can take it now. If you send it I shall want garlic. No garlic if you send milk.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 10720

339. WHAT IT IS LIKE

The recent debate between Dr Sokhey and Dr. Mangaldas Mehta on the ever-green topic of birth-control emboldens me to disclose the opinion of the late Dr. Ansari of revered memory supporting Dr. Mangaldas's position. It was now nearly a year ago I wrote to the deceased asking him whether as a medical man he could endorse the position I had taken up on the vexed question. Much to my agreeable surprise he wrote heartily supporting it. When I was in Delhi last, I had a brief discussion with him on the subject and he promised at my request to contribute a series of articles showing by facts and figures from his own experience and that of other medical men how the practice had hurt both men and women who were party to it. He gave a graphic account of the condition to which the men were reduced after they had mated for some time with their wives or other women who they knew were using contraceptives. Freedom from the fear of the natural consequence of coition had made them reckless in self-indulgence leading to an inordinate craving for

[1] The addressee has placed this letter in August/September, 1936. It appears to have been written from the hospital in Wardha where Gandhiji's food used to be sent from Maganwadi; *vide* the preceding item. Gandhiji was discharged on September 12.

seeing women which ended in dementia. Alas! he died just when he was about to write the promised series

Bernard Shaw is reported to have said that coition accompanied by the use of contraceptives was nothing less than sexual masturbation. A moment's reflection would show how accurate the description is

I receive almost daily piteous letters from students and sometimes even from teachers complaining how they had become slaves to the habit and were being gradually reduced to loss of manhood Recall, too, the correspondence[1] published in these columns from the principal of the Sanatan Dharma College, Lahore, bitterly complaining of teachers practising unnatural vice on their pupils and the consequences of the practice on their health and character. The deduction I draw from these examples is that even the union between husband and wife bereft of the possibility of its natural consequence must cause the same ruination that invariably attends masturbation or unnatural vice.

It is the philanthropic motive that no doubt impels many birth-control reformers to a whirlwind campaign in favour of the use of contraceptives. I invite them to contemplate the ruinous consequences of their misplaced philanthropy. Those whom they want to reach will never use them in any appreciable numbers. Those who ought not to use them will, without doubt, use them to the undoing of themselves and their partners. This would not matter in the least if the use of contraceptives was incontestably proved to be right physically and morally. Dr. Ansari's opinion, if my testimony about it is accepted, is a grave warning to the reformers and would-be reformers.

Harijan, 12-9-1936

340 LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 12, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Well, I am at last in dear old Segaon, without Ba, Lilavati and Moti Amtul Salaam is here for a few hours and she goes back to Wardha. Lilavati is in Maganwadi under discipline and Ba has remained there out of sympathy. All is quiet here and looking nice. In front of me are two live snakes in the cage

[1] *Vide* Vol LXI, pp 6-7

caught yesterday. Your green soap bit is there in its place. It will give a few days' work still.

You will be glad to learn that your thermos was broken to pieces after giving a night's good use. The door of the cart suddenly opened and the thermos fell out. You are not to replace it any more. I must do the best I can with improvised things. You know by this time that I am shameless enough to ask for things I need. And such a thing is a real good magnifying glass. But this at your leisure and not by post. Tell me what was the cost of the thermos broken today. It is pure curiosity that prompts the question.

I hope you have listened to me and taken expert advice about your eczema. It is a thing not to be lightly treated.

You won't be anxious about me. I shall take every care of myself.

Mira is now in her cottage.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W. 3589. Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G.N. 6398

341. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 12, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

Puri has sprung a surprise on me. He says you do not want him, his presence will be a tax on you. You want to be left alone. If so, P. must go. He too says he won't come up to your expectations. Balwantsinha will follow with milk. You will take what service you like from him. Who will sleep there? You must not put any strain on yourself I wish I could come over to you and see you face to face. But that cannot be just yet.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C W. 6363. Courtesy· Mirabehn. Also G N. 9829

342. LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

September 12, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have your letter.

What service of a Mahatma means you can realize only if you become one yourself At present you can only follow your imagination as far as it takes you. If a Mahatma gets a boil, the whole world talks about it If, on the contrary, an ordinary man gets even fistula, it is given no more importance than a boil. Nobody would know about it. That is the way things happen.

I left the hospital only today and have returned here. I am still weak, but I hope to regain strength here.

It seems now it has been raining on your side. Here it has been raining much in excess of our needs.

Your other descriptions were enjoyable. You are going ahead with your work. Let the result be what it will.

I have no wish to criticize your writing activity[1] You must put your God-given gift to good use.

Lilavati's case is certainly a very difficult one. My first attempt has failed. I am now making another. I will of course not admit defeat so easily.

Your question is correct. But I wish to bring swaraj. Why should I die before my time?

What you write about Mirabehn is also correct. She just cannot live away from me. Let us see what happens now.

I may not write more today.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 10377. Also C.W. 6823 Courtesy Premabehn Kantak

[1] The addressee had taken to writing articles, stories and even books after going over to Sasvad. She was afraid Gandhiji might not approve and had sought his opinion.

343. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 12, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Prema's letter accompanies this. You must be getting news of my illness from time to time. Neither Sardar nor Jamnalalji will be able to go there. Whom else do you expect? I would advise you not to bank upon anyone but be satisfied with whatever you can do there. You should look upon my effort as absolutely independent.

The contributions raised for the spinning fund you may use for famine relief if a state of famine prevails. But then this is only a suggestion.

Today I put my signature in the copy of the *Gita* required for Purushottam and Vijaya's use.

I returned from the hospital to Segaon today. Ba and Lilavati stayed back at Maganwadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M M U /II. Also C W 8504 Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

344. LETTER TO RAMNIKLAL MODI

September 12, 1936

CHI. RAMNIKLAL,

I must be content with writing to you only a postcard. I have not yet regained full strength. Why should you believe that you are drifting away from me? The right thing is for everyone to work according to his capacity. This alone is truth. How far can we strain ourselves or work out of a false sense of shame? If for the present Tara[1] fails to influence the Patel women, she need not feel defeated. We should render whatever service they accept and be satisfied. Tell Surendra that I have

[1] Addressee's wife

no doubt made a note of writing to him but a number of obstacles come in the way. I write only to reassure you.

Blessings from
BAPU

SJT. RAMNIKLAL
C/O. BHAILALBHAI
HARIJAN SEVAK SANGH
BORIAVI, B.B. & C.I. RLY.

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 4183

345. FRAGMENT OF A LETTER

September 12, 1936

. She should begin by reading and pondering the verse: "Thou mournest for them whom thou shouldst not mourn for."[1] She should not squabble with Ba She should not cry before her or anyone else She should not dwell on her woes

She should think of whatever good qualities she may have observed in Munnalal, Balwantsinha and Mirabehn and worship them for those qualities. She should not think of their shortcomings and if she is reminded of them she should show forbearance.

No more today. She should make a copy of this and send it to me. If anything further occurs to me I shall let you know.

If the letter to Rajkumari cannot be posted today, then post it tomorrow with late fee paid.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You will have got the bullock-cart by now.

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N. 9579 Also C W 6551 Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] *Bhagavad Gita*, II. 11

346. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 13, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have your cheerful letter. Had it been a dry path I would have walked up to you. You must not exert yourself. Patiently train Puri. Do not despair of him quickly.

Have you my torch? Have you the *falka*[1]?

I hope you have all you need.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W 6364 Courtesy. Mirabehn. Also G N 9830

347. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 13, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

As you want me to destroy your letters at once, I have always to write from memory. Yes, Shummy wrote a sweet letter which I am going to acknowledge, though he does not want me to.

Here is my diagnosis of your illness. You left in the midst of nature treatment. As it was not completed, there was a reaction in a radically changed climate. It would be called a healthy reaction if it could be treated *a la* nature-cure method. This [is] not merely hip-baths. There are steam-baths, light-baths, etc. But this was not to be I was not alarmed over the reaction but over the just resentment in the family. They cannot sympathize with nature-cure methods.

Have I made myself clear? Thank God, now there is peace in the family.

But you must not trifle with your eczema. I would certainly treat you if you were with me. But that cannot be, certainly not for cure. You have to go through the orthodox method. The quicker the better.

[1] A kind of frame for winding yarn

Yours is a departure from the orthodox routine. You may not therefore resent the criticism of the family. You will justify your rebellion only by your large-hearted charity, ever-increasing inner joy, equableness and possession of good health. Rebellions can only be justified by success If you will therefore be patient and wise in your changes, all will be well.

Please give my love to Tai, if she is still there.

You need not now give me daily letters if you are pressed for time or too lazy to write. Writing to me must be no tax on your mind or body.

Cartloads of love.

ROBBER

From the original: C W. 3741 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6897

348. LETTER TO SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

September 13, 1936

MY DEAR SUBHAS,

I hope you were given my wire in reply to your kind enquiry. My fever—an attack after twelve years of freedom—was the cause of the lateness of my reply to your questions

(1) Tea or coffee I do not consider to be essential to health. They often do harm. They may remain harmless, if tea is weak and straw colour and coffee drunk with plenty of milk with only a spoonful or two of coffee.

(2) If received fresh from the udder well cleaned and from a healthy cow, milk drunk fresh unboiled unwarmed is the best food. Next best is pasteurized milk For some stomachs sweet curds are the best. They having the yeast obviate even the use of fruit.

(3) Leafy vegetables must always be taken, better if taken as salads All leaves are not edible in the raw state. Onion, pumpkin with the skin, *pandora*, brinjal, lady's finger, turnips, carrots, parsnips, cabbage, cauliflower are good additions to leaves. Potatoes and starchy tubers should be taken sparingly.

(4) Dates are a fine food for a healthy stomach. Raisins are more digestible. I can take both freely but all cannot All can take raisins and sultanas

(5) Garlic and onion in a raw state are strongly recommended in the West. I take raw garlic regularly for blood pressure. It is the best antitoxin for internal use. It is also recommended for tubercular patients,

I think the prejudice against these two harmless vegetables is due to the odour which is the essence of them and it arose with the rise of Vaishnavism. Ayurveda sings the praise of both unstintingly Garlic is called poor man's musk and so it is. I do not know what villagers would do without garlic and onion.

(6) Yes, lemons and *gur* or honey are a good substitute for sweet oranges.

I think this answers all your questions I hope you are well. I would like to know the result of Drs Sircar's and Roy's examination.

Love.

M. K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

349. LETTER TO PURUSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS

September 13, 1936

DEAR SIR PURUSHOTTAMDAS,

You will please explain to the South African delegation my sincere regret over my inability to welcome them in person[1] Apart from convalescence it is difficult for me to tear myself away from my new home Segaon.[2] I pray to God that this visit may result in removing cobwebs of misunderstanding and bringing the two countries closer together.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers Courtesy Pyarelal

[1] On the arrival of the delegation in Bombay on September 19, 1936. The addressee handed over this letter to J H Hofmeyer, the leader of the delegation.

[2] *The Bombay Chronicle*, 20-9-1936, has· "my new love—Segaon".

350. A LETTER

September 13, 1936

DEAR FRIEND,

With reference to your letter, I am powerless to help you. You may know that for the moment I have retired from active public life But the public bodies in India and particularly the National Congress have been expressing their opinion in no uncertain terms.

Yours sincerely,
M K. GANDHI

From a copy: Pyarelal Papers Courtesy: Pyarelal

351. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 13, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have of course asked Mahadevbhai to write to you. I returned to Segaon yesterday. Except for a feeling of weakness I am all right. I am still on a diet of milk and fruit only. Mirabehn has gone to her hut. Ba is not here at present. She will probably go to Devdas at Delhi. Lilavati is at Maganwadi. Manu is with Gomati. She might now go with Ba. This leaves Balwantsinha, Munnalal, Pyarelal and Khan Saheb here. Very probably, Nanavati will come over. Several persons are in a way free because the Maganwadi kitchen has been merged with the students'. Moreover, the place is no more crowded

Amtul Salaam has come and most probably she will leave for Bombay in the evening.

I showed your telegram to Jayaprakash, but he is not a person whom I or anyone else can stop from following his own bent. He may have left today. Father is here. He had a severe attack of fever. A doctor is going to examine him. The particular ailment which Jayaprakash suffered from has abated Rajendra Babu will however stay on for the present.

Kanti has gone to Bombay for his studies.

Tell me now, haven't I given you plenty of news?

How are you? What is your diet? Do you suffer from headaches? Are you able to get milk? What about fruit?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I just read your letter of 2-9-36. How could it be that you had no letter from me for 22 days? It is true that I could not write during my illness, but that was a matter of 10 days I have not at all received the letter sent through Kanti. How could I be angry with you? Or, why should I be displeased with you? I remember no occasion when you ever gave me cause for anger or annoyance. It may be that letters go astray or that I am unable to write because of the pressure of work, but never think that I refrain from writing because I am annoyed with you. That I weigh 108 lb. after the fever should be regarded as a good sign Instead of writing to Kanti's address, write now directly to me. Kanti's address is: Satyagraha Camp, Vile Parle, B.B. & C.I. Rly. Drive away your melancholy. Write to me regularly. My birthday [according to the Vikram calendar] falls on October 12.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 3454

352. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 13, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

"It's good that we are out of the snare; we can easily reach Shrigopal."[1] We are not going to keep *Hans* or its successor going by paying a security of Rs. 1,000. A *hans*[2] will feed on milk alone. Kakasaheb's suggestion seems to be correct; but wouldn't a quarterly need a security? If it does, we may not have that either. I expect you are both doing well.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati C.W 7605 Courtesy· K. M. Munshi

[1] These lines are from a *bhajan* by Narasinh Mehta.
[2] Literally 'swan'

353 LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
September 14, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have from Nanavati the painful news that you have been weeping like mad. You will postpone your coming to Segaon so long as, while there, you do not do as I say. I had been expecting a letter in your beautiful handwriting but what I have is only bad news! What is this? Be reasonable and do as I tell you. I am helpless if you must persist in hurting me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 9344 Also C.W 6619. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

354. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 14, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

You had an attack of fever, and now it is my turn. Let us see what happens next. My diet consists only of milk or curds, *musambi* and garlic.

It is a pity that you have lost faith in spinning. It is such a great *yajna;* but I shall not argue

You may, if you wish, take the vow of *brahmacharya* once again; but please understand that it is almost impossible to observe it strictly unless the palate has been conquered There is no need of your coming to Wardha, I rarely go there You may not come to Segaon with the intention of staying.

Recoup your health.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G N. 4288

355. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

September 14, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I have your letter. I do not have anyone of the kind you want. You must yourself find such men.

Your idea of staying in a village does not appeal to me in the least. At the moment we cannot spend so much money for propaganda work among the villages. Do not expect any help from me in this programme. Even now I would suggest that you start your work without any money, settle down in a village and assess your ability. But I find you have your head in the sky, while I am a creature of the earth and do not want to move my feet away from the earth. It seems, therefore, that our paths at present are different.

What will you gain by going to Satis Babu's?

His . . .[1] I am persuading him to reduce it still further. From 42 I am trying to get it reduced by another 12.

It is obvious that you do not know the villages. How will you learn midwifery from the books? Still, you may send me the list. I will then send you the books.

I am sorry that I am not able to give you a satisfactory reply. But isn't it better that I tell you what I feel.

I had gone to the hospital after leaving behind my fever. I took quite a large quantity of quinine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a copy of the Hindi. Pyarelal Papers Courtesy. Pyarelal

[1] Illegible in the source

356. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 15, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I am glad your thumb seems to be quite restored. But I shall wait. The oozing must be stopped, not merely suppressed. Please do not trifle with it. I do not mind your feeling lazy and not taking up routine work. But you must not deceive yourself and imagine yourself to be well when you are not

How I wish you could keep Tai there for some time. My love to her.

I have not yet read the *Statesman* article. It is with me. I shall see what I can do with it.[1]

I have sent a longish letter[2] to S[hummy]. Do not worry over letters to me. Write daily, if it pleases and relaxes you. No strain, please. I shall not imagine all sorts of evil when I do not hear from you, now that I know you are free to miss a day or two.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3742. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6898

357. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 15, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I had expected to meet you at where we met yesterday and tell you why no *rengi*[3] was brought. I wanted to inspect the site when it was possible to walk there. Let us see what happens tomorrow. Are you prepared to make your own *dahi*[4] there? You need not, unless you wish.

[1] *Vide* "The Law of Our Being", 26-9-1936

[2] This is not traceable.

[3] Small bullock-cart

[4] Curds

Hope you and Puri are getting on famously.
The rains are now ruining everything. God's will be done.
Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6327. Courtesy: Mirabehn Also G.N. 9793

358. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 15, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

You are still a bad girl. You would not shoulder the little burden placed on you. This shows the stuff you are made of. I have told you that you may give me a pleasant one hour, you should not create a scene with me. Know that the more you persist in your ways, the further you push your coming to Segaon. You know best if all this is but a trick to avoid coming How heartless of you that even for the sake of my peace you would not agree to stay five miles away!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati· G.N. 9345. Also C.W. 6620 Courtesy. Lilavati Asar

359. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 15, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I received your postcard only today. I am well. There is only a little weakness, which will pass.

Amtul Salaam has left Rs. 150 for you. This I have credited to her account, for she hasn't a cowrie of her own. She makes merry at the cost of her brothers, who spend all that they earn. But even if she has her own money, why should you beg of her? When we adopt someone as our mother, is it to serve her or to serve our own interests? I do not like your selfish attitude. It would be good if you got out of it. It is not right that while Devdas pays your expenses you should go about begging like this. For my part I have told you to put in some

effort and earn while you learn. Why do you lose heart? Amtul Salaam has gone there. She had forbidden me, so I said nothing to you. However, it would be good if you could say to her: "Thinking further on the matter I feel that I ought not to accept any money either from you or from anyone else except Devdas. Therefore, I will not take money from you" But if it does not come out of your heart, then don't say it Do not scold A S or feel constrained. Even while doing what you want to, don't give up courtesy and humility. She is much hurt.

Put in as much work as you wish while taking care of your health. It is no trouble cooking one's own food. Find the necessary time and eat satisfying meals. Keep writing to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C W 7304. Courtesy. Kantilal Gandhi

360 LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

September 15, 1936

CHI JETHALAL,

I have a vague impression that I did dictate a reply to your letter of the 7th August. I have returned here after being discharged from the hospital. I feel weak. Some things I write myself, some things I dictate. Since Nanavati has come to live here, dictating has become convenient also. I shall not write more about my illness as you will know about it from *Harijan* or *Harijan Sevak* or *Harijanbandhu.* Your letter regarding the tools is encouraging. The important question for me is whether in ordering heavy implements from you the transport charges might not be as great as the price. I have been carrying on here the same experiment that you have been trying there. We have a solitary blacksmith in this village. He, too, poor man, is not very intelligent Only recently I got him to make three knives from an old file. I paid him whatever he charged. But this is not enough for me. Let me have a list of the items you wish to sell outside along with their prices, the freightage to Wardha, and so on. I need hardly assure you that I will help you in the sale of your articles, if possible. You mention a

detailed letter. I have not yet received it. Write it now. Who else are there at present and what are your activities?

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original. C.W 9856. Courtesy Narayan J. Sampat

361. LETTER TO CHAND TYAGI

September 15, 1936

BHAI CHAND TYAGI,

Your letter has been lying in front of me for many days but I could not attend to it till now. You have given me good news about Balvir. I cannot send for him as I am striving hard to live a village life. I do not have enough accommodation in this village nor do I want to add to the family here. I have now neither the strength nor the inclination to do what I could do in places like Sabarmati, etc. My aspiration of leading a village life can be realized only if I maintain a limited family. God alone knows the future, assuming that the thread of my life is to stretch farther. Rajkishori seems to have completely forgotten me. She does not even write to me. What does she do? How much does she spend?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N 6633 Also C W. 4281 Courtesy: Chand Tyagi

362. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 16, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

You seem to have deserted me How so? Do tell me all about yourself.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

363. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

September 16, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

The dinner bell has gone. You will not stir out today I am coming. You shall come to Segaon tomorrow.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. C W 6365 Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G N. 9831

364 LETTER TO AMRITLAL V. THAKKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
[Before *September 17, 1936*][1]

BAPA,

Kakalbhai brought your letter while I was still thinking of writing to you. Of course, I have not seen Kakalbhai or Balwantrai. Just now I can't see anyone, nor am I in a hurry about it. I am only slowly disposing of the arrears of work. The fever came on swift as a horse but my strength is returning at an ant's pace. This is not a complaint against God who alone knows what He has in store. He is the giver of strength, why then may He not withdraw it, too?

Why should I go to Almora to effect a reconciliation between Kakalbhai and Amritlal? Water cannot be parted by hitting at it with a lathi. The two were reconciled but is Amritlal reconciled with himself? I am not impatient to drag him back into public life; I am impatient to see his mind purified. That is why I wrote to him as soon as I heard of the matter. He will not remain in Almora if he has regained purity. For my part I make no difference between public life and private life. However accomplished a man, if he is immoral the splashes from the mud of his immorality are bound to stain public life. That we cannot see the evil splashing does not mean that it is not doing so. I am, therefore, firmly of the opinion that those who wish Amritlal well, those

[1] From the date of receipt recorded on the letter

who wish public life to advance, ought to let Amritlal cleanse himself. Only harm will be done to him and to public work by luring him into a hasty come-back. That is my view.

I fear I have not been able to make you see my point about Valunjkar. The question is only of giving to him the amount which I have promised from among the funds standing in my name. I believe that in doing so the Council's approval is not necessary. Isn't that right? Please correct me if my memory is failing me. I have of course no objection to the matter going before the Council. But on what basis would the Council generally sanction such amounts?

Rukmini is mad of course. Every fault, the famous Lombroso[1] has said, is a symptom of madness. But when is a *kubharya*[2] properly so called? It is a different matter if we dismiss the word altogether. My sympathy is with Malkani, and the pity I feel for Rukmini is of a different kind.

Do you want Amtul Salaam to return? You should not hesitate to warn me if, in spite of her good intentions, she proves a nuisance there. It was God's grace that Nilam survived. I shall await the figures. I have made the letter long enough.

BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 1170

365. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 17, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

That you have no reed pen is a good excuse. I am sending a pen herewith. I am sending a copy of the *Gita*, such as I could find; I do not know which copy you call your own. Kanaiyo knows how to make a reed pen. Learn it from him. You have written out the verses well enough, but what about their meanings?

You are expected to use hand-made paper. What's the idea of having a hand-made pen and mill-made paper? I shall feel satisfied only when you are completely calm. Send over your *dilruba*[3] for Nanavati's use if you are not playing on it. If you are, there is no need at all to send it.

[1] Cesare Lombroso, the Italian physician and criminologist

[2] Shrew

[3] A stringed musical instrument

You have to make out a copy of the instructions I have written to you,[1] and send it to me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 9580. Also C.W. 6552. Courtesy. Lilavati Asar

366. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 18, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Just a line only. Your apples have been eaten by all with relish. Not an invitation to send more.

Khan Saheb was most grateful for the attention given by you to the girls.[2] He wants you to go out of your way to befriend them and direct them the right way. Here is his letter.

I am glad Shummy is now attending to you. You will now get well quick. Obey him willingly like a good idiot that you are.

Cartload of love.

TYRANT

From the original: C.W 3590. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N 6399

367. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

[*September 18, 1936*][3]

CHI. KANTI,

I liked your letter. Ten o'clock of Friday morning has passed by. It is four now. I will wait for *Yamaraj*[4] at ten at night.[5] You do know that as it is I am always ready to welcome him.

[1] *Vide* "Fragment of a Letter", p. 277.

[2] Mehrtaj and Mariam, Abdul Ghaffar Khan's daughter and niece respectively

[3] From the reference to Manu and Kasturba going to Delhi which they did on September 19. *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", pp. 297-8. Also, the letter was written on a Friday and September 18 was a Friday.

[4] Lord of Death

[5] *Vide* "Letter to Amrit Kaur", p. 301.

I will certainly pay the photographer's Rs. 50. Where shall I send it?

About the other things, I have understood whatever you have written. However unhappy I may have felt about your going,[1] I have certainly not given up hope of you.

I have destroyed your letter.

You certainly know more about Amtul Salaam. If you want to write to me something in particular, do so. About the money I wrote whatever she told me. Now I believe every word of what you say.

I understand about Saraswati. I am sure you will not do anything blameworthy. May God give you strength.

I shall not expect a long letter from you from time to time. But you will write me a postcard every week, won't you? Write a long letter, too, occasionally.

Ba and Manu will leave for Delhi tomorrow.

This will be enough for now as it is time for the post.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C.W. 7388. Courtesy Kantilal Gandhi

368. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

8.25 p.m., September 18, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I am alarmed by your last sentence. If you think of going to a school after a year, the worth-while thing is to begin now. One may start one's studies any time, but it ought to be painful to you as well as to me if you have to flee Segaon in disappointment and join a school. Search your heart and shake off your folly. Satisfy your hunger for learning. At Segaon, what can you have except the drudgery and my temper? I cannot help fearing that you will not find your stay here bearable. I spend a good deal of my time thinking of your welfare. Not that I grudge it. But it should be intolerable for both you and me if in the end you have to give me up in disappointment. If you must come to Segaon, it is for you to determine how soon it can be done. Read my instructions again and again and carry them out cheerfully. Re-

[1] For studying medicine *Vide* "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", pp.265-6.

move all ill will from your mind. If you resent someone with whom you have to deal every day, how will you be happy with me? How shall I be at peace? Isn't this quite easy to understand? There is never any shame in doing the right thing.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9346 Also C.W. 6621. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

369. *NOTES*

About Tarabehn Mary Chesley

Almost every foreign mail, letters are being received from the late Mary Chesley's relatives and friends extolling her many virtues and telling me of the benefactions received by most of them from her and of promises of help made by her and even a will or wills left by her. Though Mahadev Desai has been giving these correspondents such detailed information as he can during the limited time at his disposal, it is necessary to make a public announcement for the benefit of all concerned that the will made by her in my favour just before her lamented death does not, in the opinion of legal friends, appear to be valid according to the Indian Succession Act. Even if it can be proved, I have no desire whatsoever to use her property, except with the concurrence of her relatives and friends, for the sake of the Indian village industries work, which was her latest and last love for which she slaved and died heroically. If the property came into my hands, of which there is very little chance, I should examine all her commitments and promises in the West and try to satisfy them before making use of anything left by her undisposed of in her lifetime. I have cheques coming from her Bank which lie with me uncashed My advice to her cousins, of whom I see there are many, is that the nearest of them should take out letters of administration and send me legal authority to part with whatever is in my hands or Miss Mary Barr's. I possess the uncashed cheques and the latter her papers and trinkets. The deceased had so reduced her personal wants in India that there is hardly anything left which can be converted into money. All she received during her lifetime was generally made over to me for village work. I hope this gives to all concerned such information as is in my possession about the affairs of the deceased humanitarian.

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING?

Two friends write to me deploring my attitude in the Ambedkar-Moonje proposal.[1] Their argument may be summed up as follows:

> Surely you are making much ado about nothing. Guru Nanak was a Hindu reformer like the others who have founded Hindu sects. Sikhs are Hindus to all intents and purposes Their culture is the same as of the Hindus. If Harijans declare themselves as Sikhs, why do you call it change of faith?

The objectors seem to be alone in their opinion. Some time after 1915 when I returned home from my self-imposed exile of fourteen years, I happened to go to the Punjab. Addressing a meeting of Sikhs, I had said they were, in my opinion Hindus belonging to a sect of reformers. A well-meaning Sikh friend spoke to me aside and said I had unwittingly offended Sikhs by calling them Hindus. Ever since that caution, I have never described them as Hindus. What they believe matters, not what I or a few individuals do. Sikhs have a separate electorate. Dr. Ambedkar does not regard Sikhs as Hindus. He definitely wants a change of faith. If Sikhs were a Hindu sect, no change in the Pact would be necessary. It is open to any Hindu to change his sect and still remain a Hindu. Moreover, neither Dr. Ambedkar nor R. B. Rajah nor anyone else can change even the sect of a whole mass of Harijans by a stroke of the pen. Religion is essentially an individual matter which each one has to decide for himself. No one who believes in religion as a sacrament can therefore be party to the proposal put forth by Drs. Ambedkar and Moonje.

Harijan, 19-9-1936

[1] *Vide* "A Dangerous Proposal", pp. 233-5.

370. OF MY RECENT ILLNESS

I would not tax the reader about my recent malaria fever except for the fact that friends are involved in the decision I have prayerfully made and which I hope God will let me fulfil.

It went against the grain for me, a confirmed believer in nature-cure methods, to go to Wardha and seek admission to the hospital. Left entirely to myself, I would have treated myself in accordance with nature-cure methods as far as possible But I could not do so without offending the friends who happened to be near me at the time. I knew that Jamnalalji too had a special responsibility, in that I had settled in a village near Wardha, his permanent place of residence With the choice of the village he has had nothing to do. It was entirely Mirabehn's and it was made because Segaon was predominantly a Harijan village and far enough from Wardha and yet not too far. I was drawn to the village in accordance with a certain declaration I had made when Mirabehn went to Segaon. Jamnalalji to an extent and Sardar Vallabhbhai altogether were against my settling in a village as yet and then in Segaon. But I bore down their opposition when I told them that I was bound by the declaration to which I have referred to settle down in Segaon. No doubt the promise was agreeable to me for my heart was in the village. Having gone to Segaon it was my intention not to stir out of it for full three seasons, i e., one year. Unfortunately there are obligations undertaken before the decision to settle in Segaon, which I shall have to fulfil and which will disturb the unbroken year's stay. I urge friends, therefore, not to make further inroads upon the period. For me it is my *sadhana* I set the greatest value upon the village problem. It may not be put off except at the cost of our very existence. India lives in her villages, not in her cities. I am supposed to guide and direct the village industries movement to which at Bombay an autonomous existence was given by the Congress.[1] I am incapable of guiding any movement in which I do not plunge myself actively and directly. Maganwadi, though a village, being a large village,[2] was not good enough for my instruction and inspiration. I needed to be in a real village

[1] In October 1934; *vide* Vol LIX.

[2] The source has "in being a large village".

presenting the problems that face one in the generality of villages. Segaon is one such village.

If then I may not leave Segaon in order not to interrupt my instruction and first-hand experience, I may not also leave it for health reasons. Segaon like most villages has its full share of malaria and other diseases which villagers suffer from. Of its population of 600 there is hardly anyone who has not suffered from malaria or dysentery. Of the record of nearly 200 cases that have come under my observation or Mirabehn's, most are those of malaria and dysentery. The simple remedies at our disposal with dietetic control have served their purpose effectively. The villagers do not go to hospitals, they cannot even go to dispensaries They usually resort to village quacks or incantations and drag on their weary existence. I claim to have some workable knowledge of common ailments. I have successfully treated myself often enough without the assistance of medical friends though they have been ever ready to help me in my need. If I was not a 'Mahatma', so-called, no one would have known anything of the recent attack of malaria. I rarely have fever. The last attack I had was nearly 12 years ago and I had treated myself. There is all the greater reason for me now, if I have another attack of malaria or another ailment, not to stir out of Segaon in search of health; and if I must have medical assistance, I must be satisfied with what I can get without fuss and without having to leave Segaon. I am fatalist enough to believe that no one can put off the hour of death when it has struck. Not the greatest medical assistance available has saved kings and emperors from the jaws of death. One like myself struggling to become a humble village servant surely ought to be satisfied with remedies easily accessible to villages. By leaving my village in search of health or the like I deny myself the opportunity of knowing what village life can be when one's health is in peril.

My malaria has quickened my resolve to study the problem of making Segaon malaria-proof. All round me the fields are water-logged. The crops are rotting. The ground is unwalkable unless you are content to wade through knee-deep mud. Fortunately a pukka road was built for my convenience through Jamnalalji's fields which keeps Segaon somewhat accessible to people from Wardha. The road has proved a great convenience for man and beast. If I had listened to friends' advice to postpone settling in Segaon till after the rains, I would have missed the rich experiences I have gained during the heavy rains of the past two months. Everything I have seen hitherto therefore convinces me that,

if I am to make any approach to the village life, I must persevere in my resolve not to desert it in the hour of danger to life or limb. And I ask all the friends to help me in carrying out the resolve and pray with me that God may give me the strength to do so.

Harijan, 19-9-1936

371. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON,
September 20, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You are in danger of losing caste even with Tai, if you persist in defending my non-violence so long as it has not become your very own. That the savage in us may get the better of us when we are tried does not affect our position, if we even while we are savage know that we are doing wrong. The fact is that in this age of doubt, we are never sure of our ground. Some attractive argument which we cannot answer baffles us instead of humbling our pride in our intellect. These questions of non-violence, birth-control, and the like are eternal problems. So it might be better for you in the long run, never to seek to defend *my* views. When it is your own views, I know [you] are more than able to hold your own. I do not want your great ability to be discounted because of your association with me. Rather would I like it to be said that neither your body nor your mind had suffered decay after you began to come to Wardha.

I am glad Shummy is now treating your eczema. You must not be touchy about the feet. Is it not better that what is in is now coming out. The only thing is to have a remedy that results in elimination, not suppression.

I hope you will have no difficulty in deciphering the leaf 4. You will have none if you will treat this as part of it. You know what I mean.

Even among closest relatives some can be shameless. I belong to that class. Therefore don't send me a thermos till I call for it. I assure you I am getting hot enough drinks. On that score you need not worry.

I entirely agree with you that women are better nurses and more attentive to details than men. Whether it is so for

modern women or not you can speak with greater authority than I can.

Your recent letters make me feel uneasy. You seem to be overdoing things again. Learn to say "No" when you are physically or mentally too tired.

Ba and Manu went to Delhi yesterday. And Lilavati is still at Maganwadi. Mira has no temperature today as yet though this is the day for it.

Your apples were eaten with great relish by Khan Saheb and me.

Sufficient for the day

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 3591 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G.N. 6400

372. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 20, 1936

CHI MAHADEV,

Do send me some envelopes.

Write to Dr. Shah about Amtul Salaam, inquiring how she is, what she does, whether she can be cured, etc.

Did you write that your lemons should be included in the parcels that come from Bombay? So far none have come

I went through Ba's letter in *The Hindustan Times.* It does reveal Ba's pain, and also Devdas's.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.N 11488

373. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 20, 1936

CHI AMTUL SALAAM,

How foolish of you! No one reads your letters and, supposing someone does, what is there for you to be ashamed of? Don't you see that your purpose could not be served because your Express Delivery letter reached late? But no one read it, having recognized your handwriting. But I read it to Mahadev to show him your folly, and both of us laughed at it.

Why do you write in Gujarati or in Hindi? By all means write in Urdu. Your handwriting is clear. Never mind if I take more time to read it.

How can I be persuaded to speak nothing to Kanti when you give money for him? You had forbidden me to discuss the matter with you and I respected your wish. I did rebuke Kanti and he then wrote to say that your wanting to help him was not a recent thing. But then if you persist in making yourself unhappy, how can I help it?

Write to me about the final decision regarding your operation.

Did you get the letter addressed to Santa Cruz P. O.? You have no more complaint regarding letters, have you? Won't you be a little reasonable, a little cheerful? You do not in any way prove your goodness by making yourself miserable.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 348

374. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 20, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I gave three days to Parameshwari, Parnerkar, Saiyuprasad, Dinkar and Dharmadhikari and talked with them to my heart's content. They all hold different opinions. Parnerkar is not prepared to take charge of the dairies. It does not seem proper to undo Parameshwari's sixteen years of experiments I have not been able to reach a final decision as even the winding up of this will take two to three months. I feel that Parameshwari should be given a further Rs. 2,000 for the expenditure up to December 31. There was some talk about sowing, to which I have already agreed. He should be given Rs. 2,000 in the same manner as he was given Rs. 500, and, whatever may ultimately come about, the sum of Rs. 2,500 should be the first charge on the establishment. Meanwhile we should meet somewhere and take a final decision. I must go to Banaras on October 25.[1] Jamnalalji, too, will be there. I have further advised Parameshwari to obtain the opinion of the Government expert

Blessings from
BAPU

From Hindi: C W 8023. Courtesy G D Birla

375. LETTER TO G.S.N. ACHARYA

[Before *September 21, 1936*][2]

I never knew that there was a movement in Andhra Desa against Hindi *prachar*[3]. But I would resist any attempt to displace the rich vernaculars of the different provinces. Hindi is not intended to take their place, but it is intended to supplement them as a medium of inter-provincial intercourse. Therefore, Hindi

[1] For the opening of the Bharat Mata Mandir

[2] The news report carrying this item is dated September 21, 1936.

[3] Propaganda

propaganda should not only not interfere with the progress of vernaculars, but it must enrich them.

The Hindu, 22-9-1936

376. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 21, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your eczema has to go. I do not know how. Will Shummy approve of gently steaming the part affected, then applying ice poultice? If you think you can discuss this with him you should do so. But at the same time you must not fret because it is a skin disease. You will be well earlier, if you will cease to think about the trouble. How I wish I was by your side at the present moment! But that cannot be.

Please tell Fielden[1] with my regards that he is working himself to death without a just cause. He ought to take leave and get well quickly. Of course the effect of malignant malaria is said to be very bad.

I wonder if Mahadev passed on to you the yarn that I was to have died of heart failure at 10 a.m. on Friday last.[2] This was sent by a learned man in all seriousness to Jamnalalji. He told me all about it. And though he made light of the information, he could not help posting poor Mahodaya here for the night. Though he was deprived of the privilege of last rites, he came in handy as Mira happened to have high fever that very day.

I hope the access of visitors has not proved a real strain on your scanty resources. I wish you could hide yourself somewhere during the cold season. Any other hill will be better than Simla. Is it impossible to try Mahabaleshwar or Ooty?

Love.

ROBBER

From the original: C.W. 3592. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G.N. 6401

[1] Lionel Fielden, first Director-General of All India Radio
[2] *Vide* also "Letter to Kantilal Gandhi", pp 291-2.

377. LETTER TO BHULABHAI J. DESAI

September 21, 1936

BHAISHRI BHULABHAI,

Shoulder the whole burden of the parliamentary election, financial as well as organizational You will yourself no doubt contribute the largest amount but also persuade others to do likewise. This task is primarily yours; others will join afterwards.

I hope Dhiru and Madhuri are fine. Blessings to them both.

Vandemataram from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original· Bhulabhai Desai Papers Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

378. LETTER TO G. D. BIRLA

September 21, 1936

BHAI GHANSHYAMDAS,

I become more and more convinced each day that for Harijan work in each province the necessary funds should be raised within the province If money has to be provided by the centre to enable provinces to carry on their work, work thus accomplished cannot be enduring. We shall also not be able to gauge the feelings of the caste Hindus. Rather than we should be forced later to cut down on our work, it is better that we should recognize our limitations

What it means is that each province should now submit its budget in the light of the above and having examined these budgets we should then provide to each province such assistance as may be feasible for a year or two. I see our work purely as a religious undertaking. Expansion of the work therefore depends on our finding self-sacrificing and saintly workers. Money will go after them. They will not have to go after money. If this has not been made clear to our Council it is only unfortunate.

If it is necessary that there should be a meeting of the Coun-

cil at Wardha to take a final decision in the matter, such a meeting may be arranged.

Yours,
MOHANDAS GANDHI

From the Hindi original C.W. 8022 Courtesy G. D Birla

379. LETTER TO ZOHRA ANSARI

September 21, 1936

DEAR DAUGHTER ZOHRA,

I cannot attend your wedding[1] but I shall certainly be with you in spirit. You will both have my blessings on that day. May God grant you long life and happiness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Urdu *Mahatma*, Vol IV, between pp. 112-3

380. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 22, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

I am glad you are keeping up your Gujarati and Hindi. How could you feel that I had ceased to take an interest in your welfare! I am glad you are in a more commodious house. You must get rid of your malady. It is tragic how your mother is being hindered Let us hope however she will be able to come at last.

Love.

Blessings from
BAPU

Spiegel Papers Courtesy· Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] With Shaukat. The wedding was to take place on September 25; *vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", pp. 315-6

381. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 22, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters came in the same day one after another. I know that my letters comfort you. Therefore I am trying to write to you as frequently as I can.

How I wish I could have you under my care in December and onward. But your eczema must disappear before then. Sardar Vallabhbhai is due there on 24th. I have asked him to get Deshmukh[1] to examine you. He is a good all-round man. He might be able to find the real remedy. I take it Shummy won't mind that.

Of course I shall write to Shummy to let you come to me between December and February both inclusive. But I don't want to write just yet or you will tell me when

The folding charkha will be sent as soon as you send me the address. It will be specially made.

I understand what you say about your letters. Your wish is being literally respected.

It does seem to me that you should let Shummy put you on a meat diet. Surely you won't refuse to take meat as medicine. You have not developed that independent conscience. Let the evolution be slow and steady If I religiously avoid meat even as medicine, it has been a life-long *sadhana* independently and deliberately undertaken. Anyway I would urge you to yield to Shummy in this repect, if he is sure that he will cure you. You must not expect the impossible from him.

Love.

ROBBER

SHRI RAJKUMARI AMRIT KAUR
MANOR VILLE
SIMLA W.

From the original: C W. 3743 Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G.N 6899

[1] Dr. Punjabrao Deshmukh

382. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 22, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

I have finished *Prithvivallabh*[1] I am now sending it to you. Read it carefully but quickly, and let me know what you think of it. The book belongs to Kakasaheb. Be careful not to soil it. Don't make any marks in it. The ones you will find in it are not made by me. We should never make any marks in other people's books.

I got your letter yesterday and the *slokas* you have copied out. How can the *slokas* convey any meaning to you unless you spend some time to understand them? Shouldn't we exercise the mind a little? The work I have given you so far is the least and the easiest. Today also I dreamt of you. What a sorry state. How nice it would be if I did not have to worry on your account!

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati· G.N. 9347. Also C.W. 6622. Courtesy Lilavati Asar

383. LETTER TO JAYANTI N. PAREKH

September 22, 1936

CHI. JAYANTI,[2]

I could manage only today to read your letter and I am dictating this at once while spinning. You wrote the letter on your birthday. Live long and bring glory to your elders and to the country by your work. I have followed your argument about the batch and it is correct. But the batch was never disbanded; for those who have this faith, it still exists. But I must admit that there are very few who have this faith. I give you the freedom you now ask for. I would have liked to have a little talk with you before granting you this freedom, if only I had the time to send for you and meet you. That would be purely

[1] A Gujarati novel by K. M. Munshi

[2] An Ashram inmate who later became Communist

for my own satisfaction I have had to forgo such satisfaction on several occasions before; so I can forgo it now. Do only what your inner voice tells you. In this alone lies your good. Only make sure that you rightly understand what the inner voice says. If the inner voice prompts a murderer to commit murder, a debauch to commit debauchery, or a thief to commit theft, we shall not regard it as the inner voice. Men of experience have therefore laid it down that he alone can have recourse to the inner voice who has acquired the ability to hear it. As men have often failed to understand this clearly, they have pillaged and plundered in the name of religion. However, I know I don't have to explain all this to you. Write to me occasionally. I am in correspondence with several socialists, though not with our comrades from Gujarat. If I set out to seek such contacts on my own I would be overwhelmed by them. I reply to those who write to me, but at present I am curtailing even that kind of correspondence, as I desire at present to bury myself in Segaon and be forgotten. Even if this desire cannot be wholly fulfilled, should I not at least do all I can to realize it? And that is what I am doing. A certain amount of correspondence has therefore come to a stop

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 6263

384 LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 23, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am trying to send you somebody. Frontier Gandhi is not sent out anywhere. So this will be rather difficult.

Do keep throwing out the names that occur to you. Why is it not possible to find out from the books what amount was sent by Sorabji? Durban has been urgently demanding it. Maybe Chhaganlal [Gandhi] will know and maybe Chhaganlal Joshi, too. The books are there For the rest, anyone can look into them and find out. We don't have so very many ledgers, do we? What is the difficulty?

I enclose a letter from Jaisukhlal. It contains complaints against Chhaganlal Joshi. I had written to him that he should

allow me to show these complaints to Joshi. At last he has sent me the permission. But he has added that I should send the letter through you and obtain your opinion also. That is why I am sending you the letter. Do let me have your opinion and, unless you have some objection, show it to Joshi and ask him to send me his reply Or I shall send it direct to Joshi if you so wish.

You may always take for granted thousands of blessings from me on your birthday I have cherished many hopes of you. They have also borne fruit, and will further do so. But the real test will come when I am no more, won't it? I have assumed that then, too, you will succeed.

I am reaching Ahmedabad on the 30th and from there I shall have to rush off to Nadiad the same day My wish to see the elders before that is growing stronger and stronger I shall therefore try and drop in if I can I shall leave soon after receiving the blessings of the elders. There should be no fanfare. No one is to be informed. You should not expect me to do any other work. At the most I shall spend one night there. I shall not have all that time and I shall arrive in the morning and leave at night. For me this is nothing but a pilgrimage. You, too, should give up all thought of taking advantage of my presence for some other cause. Persons like Nanalal Joshi will of course know, and anyway Shuklasaheb will have to be informed However, everyone should understand that my visit to Rajkot is not to be considered a visit at all. It is likely that Khan Saheb will accompany me, and you may take advantage of his presence then but don't make any announcement in advance.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M.M U /II Also C W 8505. Courtesy. Narandas Gandhi

385. LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

September 23, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

I have your letter I do not wish to annoy you on account of Amtul Salaam. I am satisfied that you visited her.

It is certainly good that you have been using a mosquito-net. Do not take it for granted that you will remain free from fever in spite of taking all sorts of liberties with yourself. As for the studies, you should observe some restraint. Why should you strain your eyes at night after having studied the whole day?

I had forgotten to write about Saraswati. I shall enquire about her from Ramachandran and then let you know.

I expect you have been regularly writing to Devdas. Ba will be glad to have a little note from you. Did I tell you that Ba and Manu have gone to Devdas? Here at present we have two additions—Pyarelal and Nanavati. Lilavati continues to stay at Maganwadi.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. C.W. 7306. Courtesy: Kantilal Gandhi

386. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 23, 1936

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

Mahadev gave me your letter about Deka. I have read Deka's letter. Fortunately Shankerlal too happens to be here. I have had a talk with him too. A copy of my letter[1] to Deka is enclosed from which you will see that you have no reason to worry about him. You must have got the letter I wrote to you some time back. I was sorry to read about Mother being unwell. I hope she is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N. 2444

[1] This is not traceable

387. LETTER TO SUNDARLAL

September 23, 1936

MY DEAR SUNDARLAL,

You did well in writing to me this letter[1]. I have not seen Maulana Abdul Haq's statement I saw only a portion of it. Please send me a copy of that statement

Whatever I have done in this connection, I have done with absolutely pure intentions My position is exactly what it was in 1920. My efforts are directed towards the acceptance of the word. That is why I got the word 'Hindustani' passed by the Congress. I could not do so in the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan Therefore, at Indore, I got the connotation of the word Hindi clarified In the All-India Sahitya Sammelan[2] I went one step further. My object was the same, viz., to give one common name to the two forms of the language as used by the Hindus and by the Mussalmans, as well as to make them one language in reality.

You have yourself written that the adoption of the name Urdu had its special reasons. I never meant to attribute motives for this adoption.

You have also accepted what I said with regard to grammar. That Hindi writers commit mistakes of another type does not disprove or falsify my statement.

The prevalent misunderstandings are bound to be removed, because there is absolutely no ground for them I do not at all want to give up Urdu. I have sufficient regard for it. I attach sufficient value to it I daily read from some Urdu work or other. I also write letters in Urdu to several Muslim sisters and brothers. I have patience enough.

[1] In the letter the addressee had regretted that the Hindi-Urdu controversy, which was mainly a literary affair, should have been given a communal shape Comparing the grammar and idiom of the two he emphasized that they were fundamentally the same Urdu and Hindi writers were both obstructing the formation and development of a common Hindustani language and confusing its grammar He explained that neither "Hindi" nor "Urdu" could rightly denote this common language

[2] At Nagpur on April 24 and 25, 1936; *vide* Vol. LXII, pp. 344-7.

I think I have cleared all your points If there still remain some doubts, we shall see about them later. Even for writing this I could with difficulty snatch a few moments.

Yours,
BAPU

PS

One thing more. The language of the sentences you have quoted is not mine From where did you take them?[1]

The Searchlight, 9-10-1936

388. PREFACE TO "GITAPADARTHAKOSHA"[2]

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 24, 1936

Kakasaheb has explained in his own foreword why this *kosha*, which was prepared twelve years ago[3] and which has not come up to the required standard yet, is being published today.

This *kosha* is indeed necessary for those who are at all interested in the translation[4] which has been published under my name. Maybe it will be useful to other students of the *Gita* as well. To them I would suggest that if they do not like the interpretations given in the *Padarthakosha* and prefer others, they should note these down in the book itself By doing so, they will have a glossary of their own liking with very little effort. And if such students send me the interpretations of their choice, I shall be grateful.

The more I study the *Gita*, the more I am made aware of its uniqueness For me, it is a spiritual dictionary. Whenever I am in doubt as to what I should or should not do, I fall back upon it, and so far it has never disappointed me It is indeed a Kamadhenu[5]. In the beginning, we recited one *sloka* a day, then two, then five, then a chapter a day, then a complete recitation in two weeks and, finally, in the last few years

[1] The original letter was in Hindi

[2] This appeared in the book under the title *Request to Readers* and also in *Harijanbandhu*, 25-10-1936, under the title "Gitarupi Kamadhenu" A *padarthakosha* is a concordance as well as a glossary

[3] Gandhiji had prepared this *Padarthakosha* while in the Yeravda jail in 1922-24; *vide* Vol XXV, pp 155-6.

[4] *Anasaktiyoga*, *vide* Vol XLI, pp 90-133

[5] Mythical cow that gave anything that was desired

some of us have been able to do a complete recitation in seven days. And on particular days of the week the sound of particular chapters is heard around 4 30 a m Some—a very few —have learnt all the eighteen chapters by heart. The morning prayers include the chapters in the following order during the days of the week.

Friday I, II	Tuesday XIII, XIV, XV
Saturday III, IV, V	Wednesday XVI, XXII
Sunday VI, VII, VIII	Thursday XVIII.
Monday IX, X, XI, XII	

Suffice it to say that there has been some deliberation behind this schedule Our experience has been that this order facilitates understanding of the text.

It may well be asked why the recitation has to begin on a Friday. The reason for this is simply the following· For considerable length of time a complete recitation used to take fourteen days. In the Yeravda jail I thought of a seven-day recitation and the idea was put into effect on a Friday. In this way and since that day, the recitation week begins on a Friday

There are two reasons why I mention the matter of complete recitation here. to show how far devotion to the *Gita* has taken some of us up to date and to indicate to the reader the way to encourage its study

But we are not to rest content with merely reciting the *Gita.* It is a spiritual dictionary; it is a tremendous force for straightening the creases of the soul, it is the refuge of the afflicted, it is an awakener from stupor. Only those who have this faith can derive help from reciting the *Gita.* I do not in the least suggest that recitation of the *Gita* without an understanding of its meaning is by itself beneficial to a man With sufficient effort a tame parrot can certainly be taught to memorize the *Gita.* But that is not going to bring the slightest merit either to the parrot or to its trainer.

The *Gita* is the living, life-giving, immortal mother. The mother who suckled us will one day disappear and leave us in the lurch. We see countless mothers failing to protect their children from peril But one who seeks the support of Mother *Gita* saves himself from the greatest peril She is ever wakeful and she never lets one down. But a mother will not give one nourishment unless one asks for it. Mother *Gita* too gives nothing without our asking for it. Before taking anyone under her wing she tests him severely, expects whole-hearted devotion The devotion, too, should not be dry. She wants single-minded

devotion. Hence, she plainly refuses to help those who are not prepared to surrender their all to her.

The student of physics gains an insight into his subject only when he is crazy after it. Those who obtain M A and B A degrees read day and night, spend money and put themselves to great physical strain From amongst those who make such efforts, only a few are successful at the first attempt. Those who fail do not despair but try again and again and only rest when they have passed. And in the end—?

For those who wish to drink the nectar that is the *Gita*, much greater effort than this should be and is required. But how many want to partake of that nectar? Even of those who feel the need, how many are prepared to make a strenuous effort? We know that the number of people devoted to the *Gita* in the way I have suggested is negligible. Yet all agree that the *Gita* is the essence of all the Upanishads. No Hindu should remain ignorant of it. At present, however, all religion has depreciated in value. This is not the occasion to go into the reasons for this. In this note of appeal all that I have tried to do on the occasion of the publication of this volume is to draw the attention of seekers to the gem that is the *Gita* and to suggest how it can be put to good use. May it bear fruit.

MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI

[From Gujarati]

Gitapadarthakosha, pp iii to vi

389. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

September 24, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

This is a left hand effort just to give the right a little rest.

You do seem to be overworking yourself You ought to find a way out

The newspaper cutting is funny. They cannot live without lies. Presently they will reduce you to thin air! ! ! Then you will fly about everywhere without any escort and I shall need provide no corner for you when you choose to waft yourself to Segaon. The only difficulty will be how to make you out—a mere airy nothing. Well, by the time you become nothing, I shall have grown a sixth sense enabling me to recognize beings or non-beings of the air,

Don't you think that I have nothing else to do but to write nonsense. I wanted to chat with you. I don't want to be always lecturing to you on your eczema. And the wretched cutting gave me the text for this letter.

The apples have come in again. Are they still from your garden?

Love

ROBBER

From the original C W 3593 Courtesy· Amrit Kaur Also G N. 6402

390 LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

September 24, 1936

CHI AMBUJAM,[1]

Your fruit has been coming in regularly and it has been serving its purpose

I returned to Segaon on Saturday. I am keeping well though still feeling weak. I don't want to move out of the place if I can at all help it.

I see that Mrs. Rangasami has given you Rs. 2,000 for the Hindi work

I hope Kichi is better and that Father and Mother are also keeping well. And how about you?

I am glad you are continuing the *Ramayana*

Love.

BAPU

From the original Ambujammal Papers Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

391 LETTER TO A H. WEST

September 24, 1936

The Phœnix experiment for me was a life-work. And so, if you ever come to India, you will find me amid conditions simpler than in Phœnix. For the ideal has not only persisted but it bears today an ampler meaning

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary. Courtesy Narayan Desai

[1] This is in Hindi.

392. LETTER TO BALWANTSINHA

September 24, 1936

CHI. BALWANTSINHA,

I have your letter. Who knows when this will reach you

Everything is going on smoothly here. Every day there is a churning, giving lots of butter. Today two and a half seers of curds yielded fourteen *tolas* of butter which gave ten *tolas* of ghee. Pyarelal has become an expert at it. Munnalal looks after the milk.

We had a heavy rain today.

Kishorelal's letter is enclosed. He is all right now, though pretty weak.

Tell Maharaj[1] that I got his letter.

Yes, give them a sound training in sanitation too.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G N 1887

393. LETTER TO M. S KELKAR

September 25, 1936

DEAR ICE[2],

What shall I say to you? I would love to have you by me and yet, with all your belief in stars, I have no faith in your treatment Your belief, too, that I gained by your treatment is not quite correct After all your effort, I had at last to undergo an operation[3] You treated many patients in Sabarmati but except little Manu who had raw eggs, nobody derived any permanent relief You have been trying all these many years to settle down to solid work but you still remain a rolling stone. I very much fear that you are self-deluded It is high time you recognized your limitations. I know you have talent and energy It grieves me to find it running to waste.

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy Narayan Desai

[1] Sant Tukdoji Maharaj, the addressee had gone to his Ashram at Mojhari to teach carding, spinning, etc

[2] The addressee was a specialist in ice treatment

[3] On January 20, 1919, *vide* Vol, XV, p 73,

394. LETTER TO BAL D. KALELKAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 25, 1936

CHI. BAL,

It is strange that you of all people should have this sudden craze for testimonials. However, if you want one here it is.[1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 2178

395. TESTIMONIAL TO BAL D. KALELKAR

September 25, 1936

Chi. Bal, the younger son of Kakasaheb Kalelkar, is well known to me It may be said that he was brought up under my care at Sabarmati Ashram He is very intelligent, sociable and cheerful His ambition is to live a life of service after acquiring much knowledge Chi. Bal rendered me excellent service during my second 21-day fast[2] and on other occasions. He is entitled to my blessings at all times.

MOHANDAS GANDHI

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 2177

396 LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 25, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Not only are you foolish, but you are also silly. Your letter is full of nonsense It appears that in your view no man is good. I got your letter regarding Dr. Gilder. He did not open any of your Urdu letters nor has he read any. I read out your last

[1] *Vide* the following item

[2] From May 8 to May 29, 1933; *vide* Vol LV.

letter to Mahadev as it contained nothing confidential. Doesn't a parent have that freedom?

I had replied immediately to your letter regarding Dr. Gilder saying that if you needed to be examined by Dr. Gilder it could be arranged. Did you get my letter addressed c/o Bari, the Theosophical Lodge? I have not failed to reply to any of your letters What can I do if letters fail to reach you? If you wish, I shall obtain a certificate of posting. Why do you make yourself unhappy for nothing?

Zohra and Shaukat are getting married today in Delhi. The ceremony will be entirely private.

Write to me regularly You should write only in Urdu

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati· G N 349

397 *LETTER TO TARABEHN N. MASHRUWALA*

September 25, 1936

CHI. TARA,

What shall I say to you? I would not like to rebuke you but I cannot bear your not keeping your promises. Where is the account you were going to render every week? It is not even in the letter you write. Why are you so sluggish? When will you wake up?

Do you write to Dr. Ooman? You should have kept up the contact for the sake of your studies if for nothing else. If you have broken with him, I would recommend that you make it up with him I have not given up hope. It is open to you to get from me fresh instructions from day to day. But you do not seem to be interested even in improving your health Who can create this interest in you? It is our duty to preserve this largesse from God and make noble use of it But it seems you have closed all your doors. This is not right. You have strength, a desire to serve, candour and purity. But there is also in you something—call it obstinacy or stupidity or some other failing—that does not let your potentialities flower It would be a good thing for you to find out that shortcoming and resolutely remove it. Open up your mind, which you have locked.

I got the yarn. Congratulations to those who participated in the spinning. I trust your parents are doing well. Do you make use of Oommen's book or his box?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 7528. Also C.W. 5004. Courtesy: Kanubhai N. Mashruwala

398 LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 25, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

You shouldn't be in a hurry to come to Segaon. You have as yet not even acquired a command over your handwriting. Ask yourself whether you can live at peace with Munnalal, Balwantsinha and Mirabehn. At present we have perfect peace here and there are no quarrels to annoy me. I tremble at the thought of a threat to this peace. So think calmly and tell me yourself. Meanwhile, you are already busy with the work there. You have peace. Mahadev gets your full help. He needs that help. Therefore it seems you are in the right place. You will not take this to mean that I do not at all want to have you in Segaon. I do wish to have you here, but not at the cost of any threat to peace. Even from here I do try to guide you. Do you expect anything more? You should patiently consider whether you yourself would be happy here. Do not encroach on Mahadev's time for this. Do the thinking yourself and write to me what you feel.

I hope your leg is all right now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 9348. Also C.W. 6623. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

399. LETTER TO GOPINATH

September 25, 1936

BHAI GOPINATHJI[1],

. . .[2] Now tell me if there is in the Ayurvedic system any medicine for malaria as efficacious as quinine. Which medicine is definitely more effective than the allopathic drugs? In the villages, in spite of my strong inclination to the contrary, I have to take recourse to quinine, soda-bicarb, potassium permanganate and tincture iodine. . . .[3]

Blessings from
BAPU

[From Hindi]
Gujarati, 3-1-1937

400. LETTER TO KRISHNACHANDRA

September 25, 1936

CHI. KRISHNACHANDRA,

It is only natural for you to grieve over your father's death. What you write about [the devoted][4] Hindu [wife][5] is perfectly right. You must of course console your mother.

The question of giving up the effort to observe *brahmacharya* does not at all arise. Mother *Gita* assures us that "no well-doer meets with a sad end"[6]. You may certainly fast on Saturdays if you find it beneficial.

Consider carefully whatever you decide to do.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G N 4289

[1] Editor of *Arogya Darpana*, a Hindi journal advocating Ayurvedic system of medicine, the letter was originally published in the November 1936 issue of the journal

[2]&[3] Omissions as in the source

[4]&[5] Illegible in the source

[6] *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

401. LETTER TO SHRIMAN NARAYAN AGRAWAL

September 25, 1936

BHAI SHRIMAN,

I read your *Naye Yugka Raga.* I liked the poems. Your purpose is clear and pure. But I do not consider myself qualified to express any opinion about its poetic quality. Only poets can judge whether your work deserves to be published

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

How much time I spent over writing this! I didn't know what to write.

[From Hindi]

Panchven Putrako Bapuke Ashirvad, p 299

402. THE LAW OF OUR BEING

The Statesman has devoted a reasoned article to the argument advanced by me in reply[1] to its criticism of Canon Sheppard's war against war. In that article a very clever attempt has been made to dispute the whole of the position taken up by me.

The writer says that whilst the *Bhagavad Gita* assists him, it does not assist the terrorist. Once you admit the lawfulness of the use of physical force for purposes other than the benefit of the person against whom it is used, as in the case of a surgeon against his patient, you cannot draw an arbitrary line of distinction The *Mahabharata*, of which the *Gita* is only a tiny chapter, describes in gruesome detail a night slaughter of the innocents which, but for our recent experiences of our civilized war, would be considered unbelievable in actual practice. The grim fact is that the terrorists have in absolute honesty, earnestness and with cogency used the *Gita*, which some of them know by heart, in defence of their doctrine and policy Only they have no answer to my interpretation of the *Gita*, except to say that mine is wrong and theirs is right. Time alone will show

[1] *Vide* "God of Love, Not War", pp 260-2

whose is right The *Gita* is not a theoretical treatise. It is a living but silent guide whose directions one has to understand by patient striving.

The *Statesman* writer next likens Canon Sheppard's position to that of Arjuna. Surely this is a faulty analogy, hastily drawn. Arjuna was the Commander-in-Chief of the Pandava forces He became suddenly paralysed when he contemplated the awful scene before him As general he knew exactly what he had to do He knew that he had to war against his cousins. His paralysis was due to momentary weakness. He could not have given up the task before him without creating the utmost confusion and disorder, and bringing disgrace on himself and his innumerable friends and followers. He was bound to engage himself and his followers in the terrible slaughter for which he had trained himself and them. It is profitless to conjecture what would have happened if non-violence in thought, word and deed had suddenly but really possessed him

That rich possession, let us hope, has come to Dick Sheppard and his companions Anyway, so far as I know, his position is wholly different from Arjuna's. He is no general of an army drawn up in battle array. He makes no distinction between kinsmen and others. For him man is man, no matter where he is born or what his skin is, or what he calls himself. After having prayerfully searched through the book which for him is the Book of Life, he has been driven to the conclusion that he may not hurt his fellowmen for gain for himself or his country, and that therefore he must himself abstain from participation, direct or indirect, in war. He naturally takes the next step of preaching to his neighbours the doctrine of peace or love and goodwill towards men without exception. This is a position which Arjuna never took up.

But the *Statesman* writer has many strings to his bow. And the strongest is his denial of non-violence or love as the law of the human race. If love or non-violence be not the law of our being, the whole of my argument falls to pieces, and there is no escape from a periodical recrudescence of war, each succeeding one outdoing the preceding one in ferocity. I cannot undertake, and least of all through a newspaper article written during moments snatched from the daily routine, to prove that love is the source and end of life. But I venture to make some relevant suggestions which may pave the way for an understanding of the Law. All the Teachers that ever lived have preached that law with more or less vigour. If Love was not

the law of life, life would not have persisted in the midst of death. Life is a perpetual triumph over the grave If there is a fundamental distinction between man and beast, it is the former's progressive recognition of the law and its application in practice to his own personal life. All the saints of the world, ancient and modern, were each according to his light and capacity a living illustration of that supreme Law of our Being That the brute in us seems so often to gain an easy triumph is true enough. That, however, does not disprove the law. It shows the difficulty of practice How should it be otherwise with a law which is as high as truth itself? When the practice of the law becomes universal, God will reign on earth as He does in Heaven I need not be reminded that earth and heaven are in us. We know the earth, we are strangers to the Heaven within us. If it is allowed that for some the practice of love is possible, it is arrogance not to allow even the possibility of its practice in all the others. Not very remote ancestors of ours indulged in cannibalism and many other practices which we would today call loathsome No doubt in those days too there were Dick Sheppards who must have been laughed at and possibly pilloried for preaching (to them) the strange doctrine of refusing to eat fellow men. Modern science is replete with illustrations of the seemingly impossible having become possible within living memory. But the victories of physical science would be nothing against the victory of the Science of Life which is summed up in Love which is the Law of our Being. I know that it cannot be proved by argument. It shall be proved by persons living it in their lives in utter disregard of consequences to themselves. There is no real gain without sacrifice. And since demonstration of the Law of Love is the realest gain, sacrifice too must be the greatest required.

The rest of the argument advanced by the *Statesman* writer in refutation of mine needs no answer if the Law is recognized. His argument is valid if the Law is denied or doubted.

One point may, however, be dealt with in passing. The writer seems to pooh-pooh the idea of honour derived from[1] individual and national gain. He says· "What is this honour that would be left to a nation that voluntarily destroyed itself?" There is no question for one[2] of self-destruction, voluntary or

[1] Slip for 'devoid of', *vide* "A Correction", 10-10-1936.
[2] Slip for 'me'; *ibid*

otherwise. But there is of "a nation allowing itself to be destroyed" for the sake of preserving its honour, as would be the case, say, if Indians died to the man, without lifting a finger, in their determination not to surrender to the will of an invading host. A woman defends her own honour and that of her sex, when she non-violently refuses to the point of death the advances of a rake. Young Prahlad non-violently risked his life to defend his honour, which consisted in his persistence in declaring his belief in God Jesus defended his honour and that of man when he preferred the death of a felon to the denial of his faith.

Harijan, 26-9-1936

403. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 26, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

If the unbreakable thermos comes, I shall not return it As I destroy all your letters, I have inadvertently destroyed the Mahmudabad address. Please repeat it on a separate sheet

Surely it is 'idiotic' to pass summer in Simla merely because you possess a house there. You ought to select another summer resort where you can really recoup yourself.

Remember one of the attributes of non-violence. It seldom speaks, it simply and silently acts. It appeals not to the intellect, it pierces the heart. The more it speaks and argues, the less effective it becomes. Therefore do not hesitate to let your case be lost by default. Apparent defeat may be the hour of victory Speech is often a sign of weakness

You will please give a trial to meat if Shummy says it is necessary. Your vegetarianism will be on surer ground for your yielding now, if yielding becomes a duty.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original. C W. 3594 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N. 6403

404. LETTER TO J. C KUMARAPPA

September 26, 1936

MY DEAR KU.,

Jajuji has sent in his resignation to be presented to you, if I would agree, for submission to the Board I am not quite happy over the prospect Though J is quite capable of adjusting himself to new conditions, the manner . . .[1] to leave . . .[2] do not know that the resignation will be in the best interest of the Sangh. I will like you to examine the situation from that standpoint and that alone. Just think the thing over with Bharatan and let me have your opinion. Meanwhile I am holding the paper. I am asking J., too, to consider the question from that point of view.

From a photostat G N. 10111

405 LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

September 26, 1936

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I have your letter. The Bhangis' problem seems to have been solved satisfactorily. I am returning the letter which you want.

I am surprised about Chandulal[3]. I have sent him the relevant extract from your letter and asked for his reply.

I hope your work is going on smoothly now. It must. Very few workers are left now.

I am hoping to meet you all I only wish to pay a visit of duty There should be, therefore, no publicity.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 5540

[1] & [2] Faded in the source

[3] Chandulal Becharbhai Patel who was then Education Officer of the Gondal State. The reference is to the segregation of Harijans at public places.

406. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 26, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I myself went through your letter written in pencil. I just got your wire and am sending a letter to Dr Shah. You may show it to Dr. Jivraj if Dr. Shah is away. Send me a wire if you need anything.

You are foolish. You make yourself unhappy You deliberately suspect people. Why did you have to go away when you had fever? Why don't you write a note to Kanti and ask him to come? At the moment I don't have the courage to keep you or anybody else in Segaon. Let me settle down in peace.

Why don't you listen to me?

What do you propose to do if Bari goes out of town?

Shall I make some other arrangement for you in Bombay itself? Who are there with you in the house?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 350

407. LETTER TO K. M. MUNSHI

September 26, 1936

BHAI MUNSHI,

Kakasaheb's acquaintance with you has been growing and he is having the opportunity of reading your works. He read *Prithvivallabh* and has pressed me to read it and give my opinion on it. I read it four days ago and now send my opinion direct to you. Kakasaheb will read it You had already sent me some of your books when I was in jail where, however, I could read none of them You had even then asked for my opinion I read *Prithvivallabh* with interest. Not one character appealed to me. I did not at all wish to be like Munj Why so? It would not be quite in the fitness of things for you to say that you delineate the characters as they are. Some at least in this wide and varied world are likely to be noble, free from hypocrisy, loyal. Mrinal

you reduced to pieces, and poor Vilas melted like wax before Rasanidhi. Could it be that men are so cunning and that even a forty-year-old, homely and self-restrained woman would fall for a man's love talk and suggestive gestures? What does a man read for? For mere enjoyment? And that too so low? Kalidasa wrote nothing of the kind Shakespeare made no such impression on me. From them I learn something. Why not from you? Personally you appear to me nice and pleasant. I am drawn to you. I have hopes of getting much from you both. How did I fail to get a glimpse of your personality in *Prithvivallabh* which is regarded—or isn't it—your best work? I have little hope that Kaka can solve this puzzle for me. You alone can do it. There is of course no question in this which calls for a reply immediately

Now allow me to have a little fun. Your last sentence is somewhat like this: Crushed under the elephant's foot, Munj's body lay flat like a *rotlo*[1]. The word *rotlo* was all right; but did it ever occur to you that the body could not be turned into a *rotlo*? It may do to say 'turned into *chhundo*[2]'. The body can be turned into *murabbo*[3], into *churna*[4], but it can never be turned into a *rotlo*.

Blessings from
BAPU

From Gujarati: C W. 7606. Courtesy K M Munshi

408. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

September 26, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

You have no reason to be irregular. I definitely wish to learn of your condition even before I have recovered my strength.

I am regaining my strength. I have at present reduced my food intake. I take about a pound and a half of milk. Among fruits I take *mosambis*, prunes and occasionally *chikoos* or some other fruit. I take plenty of rest.

You can find half an hour for a hip-bath whatever work you may be doing. You must. Nor would it do to be unmindful of your food. You will be bed-ridden if you are careless in this regard.

[1] Cake made from millet or other coarse grain
[2] A preparation made by crushing the ingredients
[3] Jelly
[4] Powder

I had a good talk with Father. It was decided that Jayaprakash should get Rs 50. I take it he will himself explain things to you better. Mirabehn is of course with me. She is improving. The rains may be said to have stopped now.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N 3482

409 LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 27, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

If you do not chew garlic well, it is likely to pass out undigested. It must therefore be well pounded. You may take it the last thing before retiring in an ounce of *dahi* or at the table.

You must send me a copy of your rural broadcast.

Khan Saheb wants me specially to thank you for all you are doing for Mehrtaj and Mariam. I am glad they are coming under your influence.

Does Navin ever write to you?

Too late to say more.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original C.W 3744. Courtesy. Amrit Kaur Also G N 6900

410. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL,

You are hard to please. I have written to you daily. The first letter was sent, as instructed by you, care of the Postmaster and the later ones to the Easter Villa address. Am I to blame if you don't get the letters? And is it my fault that I cannot do something beyond my power? Tell me now how I can satisfy you.

I see no need at present to consult Dr Gilder It would be right on our part to go to another after we have tried one. Nonetheless, if you wish I shall write to Dr. Gilder too. You

may consult Dr. Jivraj if he is available and anyone else you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 351

411. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

September 27, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your postcard. I do not at all like your having to suffer, but what am I to do? Do you take anyone with you when you go to Dr. Shah's? Does he carefully attend to you? Give me the full details regularly. Is Bari still there, or has he left? I cannot help it if you make yourself unhappy.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 352

412. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 27, 1936

CHI. LILAVATI,

If I were to call you after you had copied out the whole of the *Gita*, I would ask you to copy out a hundred *slokas* a day and be done away with that excuse. What I am thinking about is the threat to my peace. Nor do I say that the fault lies with you alone. I have made the utmost demand on you because you wish to stay with me purely for training yourself

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N. 9581. Also C.W. 6553. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

413. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 27, 1936

CHI MAHADEV,

I am sending with this Gadodia's cheque for Rs. 200, which for the present is to be credited to the Segaon account. You will be sending it to Jamnalalji's, I suppose?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S N 11485

414. LETTER TO LAKSHMI NARAYAN GADODIA

September 27, 1936

BHAI LAKSHMI NARAYANJI,

I am very happy to see that you are both taken up with hydrotherapy. Let this always continue You have found a pure altruistic activity in which both of you have such great faith and I see the greatest good where the energies of you both are equally applied. I continued my morning hip-bath even through the attack of malaria, and my walks too. The hip-bath still continues though the hour has been shifted to ten o'clock. After the morning prayers I go to sleep and I cannot manage a walk after the hip-bath at 10 o'clock. Anyway I do go for walks twice a day I cannot take friction-bath because due to lack of practice the foreskin cannot be drawn back in the required manner I had made an attempt on receiving your first letter. The skin is intact and I used to take friction-bath years ago I have not yet started having the abdominal mud-pack at bedtime Formerly I used to try mud-packs on many occasions and now I shall try it for your sake if for no other reason. If I come across an honest naturopath, I would certainly keep him with me and popularize the treatment. I have not so far found such a person Most of the hydropaths in India have reduced their treatment to a means of making money. There are very few like your Moulvi Saheb, and they cannot give up their occupations. What can we do under such circum-

stances? I have the cheque for Rs. 200. I shall see how it can be utilized in Segaon. Three-fourths of the Segaon village is owned by Jamnalalji and he has authorized me to spend for the villagers' benefit whatever returns he gets from the property and I think the amount is sufficient. Hence I cannot tell you just now how and when I shall be able to use your Rs. 200 for the welfare of the people of Segaon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 5624

415. LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 28, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

You have made such progress in Gujarati as to tempt me to correct the few mistakes you have made.

I am quite well. I wish you could say as much about yourself.

I do hope you will soon have good news about and from Mother.

You must not stint yourself about food. You should eat plenty of fruit and salads

The friend you have in mind is all right.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

416. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 28, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

Herewith the message. Tell Mother[1] that I am longing as a child to rest my head in her lap and Father's[2]. It is unthinkable that I should go to Ahmedabad and not see them. So take it that, God willing, I shall be there. The date will be around 27th or thereabouts.

[1]&[2] Devkunwar and Khushalchand Gandhi

Youi purpose could be met if somone reaches there between the 2nd and the 12th. I am considering whom I can send. You may send me a wire if you have some other names in your mind.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M.U /II Also C W 8506. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

417. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

September 28, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending three articles with this. You may delete from the articles anything that you do not like. I wrote out what I had long been contemplating. I took up my pen at 8 and laid it down at 10. I took up the file at 7.30 It took me half an hour reading and rearranging the matter from Hardikar, drawing out the substance of Raja's writing and trimming the one[1] regarding the Madurai judge.

Narandas does need some public figure. Whom may we send? Can you think of somebody? How about Kaka, Jajuji, Kumarappa, Lakshmidas, Malkani? What about Bapa? Have you any woman in view? I would send no one but Mira if she were well.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Post the letter to Magan by air mail [2]

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N 11486

418. LETTER TO BRIJKRISHNA CHANDIWALA

September 28, 1936

CHI. BRAJKRISHNA,

You must have received my letter[3] about Deka. I am all right Amtul salaam is not here. She stayed for two or three days at Maganwadi but never at Segaon. She is now in Bombay.

[1] *Vide* "Remnant of Barbarism", pp 337-8

[2] The letter to Maganlal P. Mehta, however, is not traceable

[3] *Vide* p 308.

I had already read about your mother in your letter to Mahadev and I hope she is now better. How is your health?

I suppose you get my letters regularly

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi G.N 2443

419. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 29, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Your two letters at the same time

Khan Saheb is delighted that you are giving all that attention to the girls.

You should yield to Shummy now and take what meat he wants you to. There will be grace in your yielding now. There will be little or none if you yield when you are driven to it. And there will be no restraint possible. That you took very little meat when you did is no argument to prove that it will produce no effect in your case. Since you have no religious objection, I would like you to listen to me and straightway tell Shummy to prescribe what he likes. You must get rid of the eczema before you begin to move about.

I see that you can't come to me in December Let us see what is possible in January and February. Of course you are to be in Faizpur at the time of the Congress if you are able to go to Ahmedabad. When do you descend to Jullundur?

The idea of building a separate cottage for yourself in Simla is a chimera If you had one, you would be torn to pieces. You are physically unfit to have an eternal round of guests. Mira is free from fever but is not herself still But she will be quite well in a few days. I am getting stronger though slowly.

You will persevere with the hip-baths and try the sitz-bath too. I have described the latter to you. Sit on a stool with the legs outside the water which should be level with the stool and then gently wash the genitals with a smooth towel It is supposed to work wonders You should take this separately.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original C.W 3745 Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G.N 6901

420. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

September 29, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I know nothing about my birthday. I see it only as the Charkha Jayanti. The reason why you take an interest in observing the day is not that you are my kinsman but so that the charkha which is as dear to you as it is to me may gain impetus in your vicinity. In the sluggish atmosphere that prevails today this is an arduous, maybe even a rather dreary task. But faith can make a difficult task easy and a dreary task interesting. May your faith make the people around you see the power of the charkha.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M M U /II Also C W. 8507. Courtesy: Narandas Gandhi

421. LETTER TO J. P. BHANSALI

September 29, 1936

CHI. BHANSALI,

It is very good indeed that following Mahadev's advice you gave up the idea of coming to me and hiding yourself as in a cave. Your cave is there Listen to another bit of advice. For the boil in your arm-pit, perhaps plain earth will not suffice. You should let ordinary poultice be applied to it. I see no reason why it should not maturate.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M M U /II

422. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
September 30, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Your letter is full of fancies. You listen neither to your brothers nor to me. Why a cottage? Why a visit to Ooty? You ought to improve your health in Bombay. One's mother's home is the true cottage. I would have to hang my head if Dr. Shah did for money what he would not do on the strength of my letter. I advise you to accept his treatment and understand that he does what he thinks right After the nose has been attended to, you may certainly take homoeopathic treatment if you want to.

Your Urdu letters have certainly not gone astray. I have of course replied to them. Mehrtaj will pursue her studies at Vakil's school there. Lali has gone to the High School at Panchgani All will go well if you keep up your patience. The Rajkot climate is good if you should choose to go there. Balkrishna, who is staying there for the present, finds it good. I went through your letter myself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 353

423. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

September 30, 1936

CHI. LILA,

There is no end to your *lila*[1]. Yesterday you wrote, "We shall talk it out when we meet," and today you write to me that there is no letter from me. And what a bad hand you have written! It is all right if you do not go to Rajkot just now. Go there when we go to Kashi and from Rajkot join us at Ahmedabad when we leave the place. Isn't that what you want?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati· S N 11487

[1] Play, sport, especially of God

424. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 1, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I was glad to have your little note saying the toothache was over. I shall anxiously await the Dentist's report.

The unbreakable thermos has arrived after all. Let us see when that too shares the fate of the others.

More than half the apples were quite uneatable. Evidently they have now become too delicate for transport. Is there any fun in wasting money like that? Why not put to my credit all the money you thus save. It may then be used for buying good fruit as and when needed. That is a sporting offer that should appeal even to an idiot! ! !

I dare not give you more time just now as I have to attend to Nanavati[1] who is laid up with fever whose kind I do not yet know.

Love

ROBBER

From the original C.W. 3746. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur. Also G N. 6902

425 LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

October 1, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I have both your letters. Yesterday I got your last letter Day before yesterday I had to write 'no' to Achyut Patwardhan. Narandas had invited me for Rentiya Baras.[2] But I could not accept it. Would you then wish me to make an exception in your case? You must understand that from the point of view of our ideals it is good for Khan Saheb to refrain, for the present, from going out for public speeches, etc.

[1] Amritlal Nanavati

[2] Gandhiji's birthday according to the Vikram calendar

Slowly we are getting to know each other Am I then relieved?

I will be able to answer your earlier letter only at leisure. At the moment I have too much work.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Try to find some woman worker; persuade Khurshedbehn.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 3788

426. LETTER TO F. MARY BARR

October 1, 1936

CHI. MARY,

Just before retiring, this is merely to acknowledge your two love letters giving me very cheerful titbits.

My love to you both.

BAPU

From a photostat G.N. 6068. Also C W. 3398. Courtesy: F. Mary Barr

427. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[Before *October 2, 1936*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

I didn't at all like your returning after having arrived so late in the day. However, I did not have the courage to insist on your staying over, with the result that both of you were quite exhausted and reached at 11 in the night. I would not wish to ask anyone to stop over and sleep for the night in this weather. Nanavati's fever persists. It is not malaria; it may be typhoid. There is no need to send a doctor from there; I hope to cope with it.

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S N 11497

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", p. 337

428. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 2, 1936

CHI AMTUL SALAAM,

I am replying to your letter as soon as I have got it. I enclose a letter[1] also to Vadud[2], from which you will see what my advice is in the matter. I do not write more as I am in a hurry. You should act thoughtfully in your interest. You have a number of ailments. The trouble with your nails requires immediate care. It is better to follow Dr. Shah's advice regarding your nose. If, however, you wish to undergo homoeopathic treatment, take that too there. There are many doctors in Ahmedabad and also in Rajkot, no doubt. I would suggest Rajkot if you definitely do not like Wardha. At Rajkot you will be happy and have peace of mind. The question that always troubles me is how to bring you peace and happiness.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 354

429. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 2, 1936

CHI. LILA,

You have seen how from being Lilavati you have become Lila. Now before you become Lili I have to be worthy of it. If I were, I would not have to argue with you. It is difficult to become a kinsman without being a blood relation About paper you may do as you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N 9582 Also C W. 6554 Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] The letter is not traceable
[2] Addressee's nephew

430. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 2, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may bring in a doctor, if you wish, to put your mind at rest. It would be good if Amtul's letter goes today. The rest when you come At present Rajendra Babu and others have gathered here Nanavati is still not free from fever but he is cheerful

Blessings from
BAPU.

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S N 11489

431. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 2, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Did you find the Kavishar judgment in the *Times*? Do they send newspapers to Navin?—*Harijan*, *Harijanbandhu* and *The Hindustan Times*? I think Kanti too has asked for them.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N. 11490

432. REMNANT OF BARBARISM

We know by painful experience of what is daily happening in India that there are husbands enough who regard their wives as their property like their cattle or household furniture, and therefore think they have the right to beat them as they would their cattle. But I was unprepared for a judicial endorsement of the brutal habit till a friend put into my hands a newspaper cutting reporting a decision of the Sessions Judge of Madura recognizing the legal right of a husband of beating his wife.

Fortunately an English Judge on going through the calendar detected this extraordinary judgment of the Madura Sessions Judge and issued notice to the accused husband to show cause. In due course the case was heard by Justices Pandurang Row and K. S. Menon, whose judgment[1] I make no apology for quoting below:

> It is perhaps enough to say that though the learned Judge may be entitled to have his own views on the subject in a private capacity, yet he was not justified in laying down the law in this manner from his seat on the Bench declaring that the husband has the right of punishing his wife by beating her for impudence or impertinence No such right is recognized by the Indian Penal Code and wife-beating is not one of the exceptions in the chapter of 'General Exceptions'
>
> One can easily imagine the serious consequences of such a declaration being made from the Bench by a Sessions Judge unless the declaration is declared to be wrong and unfounded by this court That is the reason why we thought it necessary to state in unmistakable terms that the learned Sessions Judge's declaration of the rights of husbands in this regard has no foundation, so that no one may rely upon that in future as any justification or excuse for beating wives

It has to be confessed with shame that even educated husbands are not free from the belief in the right of husbands to treat their wives as chattels and beat them whenever they feel the impulse to do so. Would that this judgment would show them that such treatment of wives is a remnant of barbarism

Harijan, 3-10-1936

433. TEACHING OF HINDUISM

Referring to my recent articles[2] on the English peace movement led by Canon Sheppard, a friend writes:

> I hold the view that independently of the context of the *Gita* and the preliminary conversation between Arjuna and Shri Krishna, Hinduism does not stand decisively for non-violence in regard to organized invasion It would be straining too much to interpret all our best scriptures in this way Hinduism no doubt holds the spirit of compassion and love as the very highest duty for man But it does not

[1] Of which only extracts are reproduced here.

[2] *Vide* "God of Love, Not War", pp 260-2 and "The Law of Our Being", pp. 319-22.

preach what you or the pacifists preach, and it is no good straining everything into an allegory for this object.

I have admitted in my introduction[1] to the *Gita* known as *Anasaktiyoga* that it is not a treatise on non-violence nor was it written to condemn war. Hinduism as it is practised today, or has even been known to have ever been practised, has cert-tainly not condemned war as I do. What, however, I have done is to put a new but natural and logical interpretation upon the whole teaching of the *Gita* and the spirit of Hinduism. Hinduism, not to speak of other religions, is ever evolving. It has no one scripture like the Quran or the Bible. Its scriptures are also evolving and suffering addition. The *Gita* itself is an instance in point. It has given a new meaning to karma, sannyasa, *yajna*, etc It has breathed new life into Hinduism. It has given an original rule of conduct. Not that what the *Gita* has given was not implied in the previous writings, but the *Gita* put these implications in a concrete shape. I have endeavoured in the light of a prayerful study of the other faiths of the world and, what is more, in the light of my own experiences in trying to live the teaching of Hinduism as interpreted in the *Gita*, to give an extended but in no way strained meaning to Hinduism, not as buried in its ample scriptures, but as a living faith speaking like a mother to her aching child. What I have done is perfectly historical. I have followed in the footsteps of our forefathers. At one time they sacrificed animals to propitiate angry gods Their descendants, but our less remote ancestors, read a different meaning into the word 'sacrifice' and they taught that sacrifice was meant to be of our baser self, to please not angry gods but the one living God within. I hold that the logical outcome of the teaching of the *Gita* is decidedly for peace at the price of life itself. It is the highest aspiration of the human species.

The *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, the two books that millions of Hindus know and regard as their guides, are undoubtedly allegories as the internal evidence shows. That they most probably deal with historical figures does not affect my proposition. Each epic describes the eternal duel that goes on between the forces of darkness and of light. Anyway, I must disclaim any intention of straining the meaning of Hinduism or the *Gita* to suit any preconceived notions of mine. My notions were an outcome of a study of the *Gita*, *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, Upanishads, etc.

Harijan, 3-10-1936

[1] *Vide* Vol XLI, pp. 90-101.

434. HEADING FOR PROMISCUITY

Thus writes a young man:

> You want everyone to become moral in order to change the world I do not exactly know what you mean by morality—whether you confine it to matters sexual, or whether it covers the whole field of human conduct I suspect the former, because I do not see you pointing out to your capitalist and landlord friends the great injustice and harm they are doing by making huge profits at the expense of labourers and tenants, while you are never tired of castigating young men and women for their moral lapses in sexual matters and upholding before them the virtues of celibacy You claim to know the mind of Indian youth I do not claim to represent anybody, but as a solitary young man I beg to challenge your claim You do not seem to know through what environment the modern middle-class youth is passing, what with long spells of unemployment, crushing social customs and traditions, and temptations of co-education! It is all a conflict between the old and the new ideas, resulting usually in the defeat and misery of youth I humbly request you to be kind and compassionate to the youth and not to judge them by your puritanic standards of morality After all, I think every act, when it is performed with mutual consent and mutual love, is moral whether it is performed within marriage or without. Since the invention of contraceptives the sexual basis of the institution of marriage has been knocked down It has now become an institution mainly for the protection and welfare of children You will, perhaps, be shocked at these ideas I would here venture to ask you not to forget your own youth when judging the present-day youth You were an over-sexed individual given to excessive indulgence, which seems to have created in you a sort of disgust towards the sexual act and hence your asceticism and the idea of sin Compared to you, I think many young men of today are better in this respect

This is from a typical letter To my knowledge the writer has gone through several changes even during the past three months that I have known him He is still passing through a crisis. The extract quoted is from a long letter which together with many of his other writings he would gladly have me publish. But what I have quoted just represents the attitude of many a youth.

Of course my sympathies are with young men and young women. I have a vivid recollection of the days of my own youth. And it is because of my faith in the youth of the country that I am never tired of dealing with problems that face them.

For me morals, ethics and religion are convertible terms. A moral life without reference to religion is like a house built upon sand. And religion divorced from morality is like 'sounding brass' good only for making a noise and breaking heads. Morality includes truth, ahimsa and continence. Every virtue that mankind has ever practised is referable to and derived from these three fundamental virtues. Non-violence and continence are again derivable from Truth, which for me is God.

Without continence a man or woman is undone. To have no control over the senses is like sailing in a rudderless ship bound to break to pieces on coming in contact with the very first rock. Hence my constant insistence on continence. My correspondent is right in saying in effect that the coming in of contraceptives has changed the ideas about sexual relations. If mutual consent makes a sexual act moral whether within marriage or without, and by parity of reasoning even between members of the same sex, the whole basis of sexual morality is gone and nothing but 'misery and defeat' awaits the youth of the country. Many young men and women are to be found in India who would be glad to be free from the craving for mutual intercourse in whose grip they find themselves. This craving is stronger than the strongest intoxicant which has ever enslaved man. It is futile to hope that the use of contraceptives will be restricted to the mere regulation of progeny. There is hope for a decent life only so long as the sexual act is definitely related to the conception of precious life This rules out of court perverted sexuality and to a lesser degree promiscuity. Divorce of the sexual act from its natural consequence must lead to hideous promiscuity and condonation, if not endorsement, of unnatural vice.

Since my own experiences are relevant to the consideration of the sex problem, let me just warn the reader who has not read my autobiographical chapters[1] against drawing the conclusion that my correspondent has drawn about my sins of indulgence. Whatever over-indulgence there was with me, it was strictly restricted to my wife. And I was living in a big joint family where there was hardly any privacy except for a few hours at night. I awoke to the folly of indulgence for the sake

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX

of it even when I was twenty-three years old, and decided upon total *brahmacharya* in 1899,[1] i.e., when I was thirty years old. It is wrong to call me an ascetic. The ideals that regulate my life are presented for acceptance by mankind in general. I have arrived at them by gradual evolution. Every step was thought out, well-considered, and taken with the greatest deliberation. Both my continence and non-violence were derived from personal experience and became necessary in response to the calls of public duty. The isolated life I had to lead in South Africa whether as a householder, legal practitioner, social reformer or politician, required, for the due fulfilment of these duties, the strictest regulation of sexual life and a rigid practice of non-violence and truth in human relations, whether with my own countrymen or with the Europeans. I claim to be no more than an average man with less than average ability. Nor can I claim any special merit for such non-violence or continence as I have been able to reach with laborious research. I have not the shadow of a doubt that any man or woman can achieve what I have, if he or she would make the same effort and cultivate the same hope and faith. Work without faith is like an attempt to reach the bottom of a bottomless pit.

Harijan, 3-10-1936

435 LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 3, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

I was delighted to hear that you were examined by Dr Deshmukh even though it was after daylight Let us hope you will profit by his prescription

S[hummy]'s antipathy to nature-cure is either a simple pose or simply due to prejudice born of ignorance Ansari always appreciated it

How I would love to have you with me even in your bad health and nurse you to good health! But you must not be impatient. No one can get out of his or her limitations whether external or internal without patient and persistent striving

I fear your fretting over this eczema is due to the tempo-

[1] However, Gandhiji actually, took the vow in 1906; *vide* Vol XXXIX, p. 167.

rary disfigurement. What vanity, if my surmise is right. You will certainly have to come to me to shed it And here at least you won't be conscious of the spots or any such thing Here you won't have the society of your peers Anyway this continual brooding over the ailment worries me. I want you to be above it. Can you do it? Make a brave effort and forget the wretched thing.

Of course, when I say nothing about myself you should know that I am well. But I have a sick companion to nurse. He is Nanavati—a first-class worker and good singer. He was in charge of the kitchen in Maganwadi. He seems to have a mild attack of typhoid. He is simply on orange juice or honey and hot water He has hip-baths and enema daily. He is keeping up his strength and is quite cheerful I expect he will be free in seven days. This is the fifth day. As you know, I love nursing. It is no strain on me Pyarelal is in charge of the kitchen. He is a sleepless giant.

Sardar is due here today.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original· C W 3747 Courtesy· Amrit Kaur Also G N 6903

436. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 3, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

Yesterday I wrote to you in a great hurry. Today also I am in a hurry. Nanavati, beset by fever, lies in bed before me. I have wrapped him in a wet sheet. I would not approve of your going to Trivandrum for improving your health. The climate there cannot be said to be good. Nor would the food there quite agree with you, and an expert doctor may not be readily available. The place, moreover, is so far away for you that you should go there only after improving your health. I have no objection to your going there to meet Saraswati after you have recovered. I have already told you what you should do. As for Kanti, he always has my blessings.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G.N 355

437. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 3, 1936

CHI MAHADEV,

I am sending with this some telegrams. Any news of Sardar? Motihari perhaps has no telegraph office.

I am sending the letters also.

I will send away Jawahar from here at 10 o'clock since on account of illnesses here I shall not be in a position to provide meals to anybody tomorrow You will of course be arriving here tomorrow I proceed on the assumption that Sardar will certainly reach this afternoon.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Ask Kumarappa or Bharatan to read the telegrams so that no mistake is left Kanu should despatch the telegrams, post the letters and make the required copies, if Mahadev is already on his way here.

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N. 11491

438 LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

October 3, 1936

CHI. DEVDAS,

I see your pain in Ba's letter.[1] I was already aware of hers. But what is unavoidable you should not worry over[2]. Besides, no one can say what part, knowingly or unknowingly, I or we both parents might have played in Harilal's fall, and to what extent The saying 'the quality is in the seed' contains a whole Shastra There is a similar proverb in Gujarati, "As the banyan so its fruit, as the father so the son" When such thoughts occur, I don't feel like finding fault with Harilal. What is the use of being angry with myself? I know

[1] To Harilal Gandhi

[2] Reference to *Bhagavad Gita*, II 27

how lustful I was then. I do not know anything else. But who can understand the inscrutable ways of God? We can only deduce principles from well-known illustrations.

Let me know if you have received any comments on Ba's letter whether through public or private correspondence.

How are you? Are you making any progress?

How is Lakshmi? Is Ba happy? Or is she annoyed? How is Manudi?

Kanti has plunged into his studies.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 2037

439. LETTER TO KASTURBA GANDHI

October 3, 1936

BA,

There has been no letter from you lately. Have you been ill? If so I hope you are recovered by now. Mirabehn is better. She is of course weak She has no fever Nanavati, who has some fever still, is likely to be free from it in a couple of days

I read your letter in the newspaper. What made you write it? Your letter has prompted an Englishwoman to write to you. Understand the letter with the help of Devdas and ask him to write her a reply. Lilavati comes here from time to time with Mahadev Things are going on fairly well

All of you there, I expect, are now all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 2038

440. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 3, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

Your letter brings tears to my eyes. On the one hand, I think that what you say about milk and fruit is true, while on the other hand, we cannot afford your falling ill for want of that kind of food. What is more, any saving thus effected would be spent in paying the expenses of the doctor and the medicines in case you fell ill. So difficult is dharma. It is not proper for me to send you the extra money nor proper for you thus to take more milk and fruit I must keep my peace having said that you should, if somehow it is possible, take more milk and fruit. God will protect you. Who am I to worry on your account?

You are quite right in saying that you do everything after consulting me. You are also right in saying that you do it in obedience to my command. If your dharma to do what you have been doing is clear to me, how can I give you an order to the contrary? And, how can I arrange to pay you Rs. 25 as long as you remain occupied with your own family? Hence, I have decided to obtain another Rs. 25 also for Jayaprakash and have even given instructions to send it. You should of course take full rest, and also do a little walking. I expect you are not taking oils and spices, and that you take whole-wheat flour. What leafy vegetable can you get? Is the jaggery that you get good?

I have written to you about myself earlier. I am on milk, fruit and vegetables. I have not started taking chapatis for fear of fever. I have not been weighed recently, as the necessary arrangements do not yet exist. Ba is still with Devdas, and Manu too.

What else would I tell Father about you? He praised your nature and was pleased with you. Yes, I shall reach Kashi[1] on the 24th and leave it on the 26th for Rajkot. After

[1] Gandhiji was to open there a Bharat Mata Mandir at the invitation of Shivprasad Gupta

paying my respects to Narandas's parents, I shall go to Ahmedabad and after staying there for three days, to Segaon. You aren't likely to come to Kashi, are you?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 3483

441. *TALK WITH JAWAHARLAL NEHRU*[1]

[October 3, 1936][2]

That is why we have made you the King Canute so that you may do it better than others.[3]

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU But is there no better way? Must you do all these things yourself?

Who else is to do it? If you go to the village nearby, you will find that out of 600 people there 300 are ill. Are they all to go to the hospital? We have to learn to treat ourselves. We are suffering for our own sins. You must have seen in the series of articles Pyarelal has written on the water problem in Bengal that we have brought on all the diseases like malaria, cholera, and the rest ourselves. How are we to teach these poor villagers except by personal example?

Harijan, 10-10-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Mahadev Desai mentions in his "Weekly Letter" published in *Harijan*, 17-10-1936, that Jawaharlal Nehru along with Sardar Patel visited Segaon on this date.

[3] Nehru had compared Gandhiji's insistence on nursing the patients himself to that of King Canute's attempt to stop the tides

442. TALK WITH AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI[1]

[After *October 3, 1936*][2]

If you feel like going because you think it would please your parents better if you were in the hospital or under Kakasaheb's roof, you should certainly go I can ask for a stretcher at once and have you shifted But if you think of going out of consideration for me, let me tell you that you will be untrue to me. No son would think of leaving his father out of consideration for him The father himself would feel deeply hurt if he whispered a suggestion of that kind. And no consideration is needed. I can get any amount of help here, I know that I can nurse you back to health as clearly as I knew that I should nurse Ba back to health when she was at death's door in South Africa,[3] or as clearly as I knew that I should pull my son Manilal through his enteric which lasted for 42 days[4] The doctors in both cases gave me grave warnings and said the responsibility for their deaths would be mine. But I was as ready to sacrifice them as I was anxious to save them and careful to nurse them. Well, God tried my faith, but He also gave me the strength to stand the trial. I may tell you, as you are a brave man, that I am not afraid to lose you, if it should come to it, but I know that I am doing all that is needed to pull you through. If, therefore, you will decide to leave me out of pity for me, you will be untrue to me and to yourself. I am making this so clear to you because we are satyagrahis, we have to weigh the motives and springs of action of everything that we do, and we should deceive neither ourselves nor others.

[1] In his "Weekly Letter" Mahadev Desai introduces this as follows. "[Amritlal Nanavati's] condition has been apparently giving us all some anxiety, and Kakasaheb and I and other friends thought that he should be removed to the hospital, both in order to relieve the congestion and lighten Gandhiji's task and anxiety as also to place the patient within reach of medical treatment When we went with the proposal Gandhiji was perfectly agreeable to his removal but he insisted on making one or two things clear "

[2] As reported by Mahadev Desai

[3] *Vide* Vol XXXIX, pp 259-60

[4] *Vide* Vol XXXIX, pp 199-201

Nanavati had no difficulty about answering "I am thinking of going only because of you I feel that I should not be the source of so much worry to you. Otherwise I know that nowhere else in the world am I going to get better nursing and more loving attention" And he elected to stay

Harijan, 17-10-1936

443 LETTER TO KANTILAL GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 4, 1936

CHI. KANTI,

Your letter reached Wardha yesterday evening and came to my hand this morning. You must have received the telegram I immediately sent just for the peace of your mind even though it is Sunday.

I shall not write at length as I am sitting between two sick-beds. Balwantsinha and Nanavati are in the grip of fever.

You are in a painful situation from which you will no doubt free yourself Have patience and courage. You should refuse politely but firmly to see her, saying that you have orders from me. I am writing[1] to her also not to see you at all and not to annoy you. For fear of the nuisance she may cause you, you do not have to go to Ahmedabad where too she is likely to follow you. I have myself suggested to her that she might go to Ahmedabad or to Rajkot. I have told her not to go to Trivandrum while she is unwell.[2] Even if she follows you everywhere, you will be free from her only by refusing to see her.

However, if you otherwise like the idea of going to Ahmedabad you may by all means go. You may stay with Maganbhai and Diwan and Ballubhai will welcome you [to their school]. Devdas will pay the fees . I only want you to pursue your studies in peace, without any obstacle. I shall see that you do not have to suffer annoyance from Amtul Salaam Write to me from time to time. Take no step in a hurry

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: C W 7307 Courtesy Kantilal Gandhi

[1] *Vide* the following item

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Amtussalaam", p 343.

444. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 4, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I have today a very painful letter from Kanti. He says that you do not leave him alone and waste his time talking for hours about useless things though he has not a minute to spare. I had told you specifically that you might see Kanti only if he wished it I have forbidden Kanti to see you, and I am forbidding you also to see him. Kanti's future will take care of itself; you may not bother about him. Just get well as early as possible.

Tell me in your letter that you will not see him any more. Write to me whatever you want to say to him. You must have got my letter of yesterday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 356

445. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 5, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Two baskets with apples and one containing honey have arrived, also the two glasses.

I do hope Deshmukh will see you again.

Of course I am not going to strive with you any more about meat. I do want to respect your scruples.

I await your experience of the S. A. Delegation[1].

Don't expect long letters from me just now. I have two serious cases and now Mira is down again. She does not know how to regulate her diet Who does? Idiots may.

Love.

ROBBER

From the original C W 3595 · Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6404

[1] South African Delegation, *vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", p. 280.

446. LETTER TO J. H. HOFMEYER

October 5, 1936

DEAR MR. HOFMEYER,

It was a great pleasure to receive your warm letter.[1] I do hope you are having a profitable time in this land and that you find the people you meet to be hospitable.

It will be a matter of regret to me that although you have so many friends in India, we may not meet at all.

You may be interested to know that the paper I am writing on is hand-made written with a village reed pen. You ought not to leave India without seeing some typical villages. Of course it is foolish of me to expect you to visit Wardha and Segaon and glance at the humble effort we are making.

With kind regards to you and fellow members,

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy Narayan Desai

447. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 5, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending whatever could be got ready My article is still unfinished, and I must detain Kanu for an hour more if I wish to complete it. I shall, therefore, send it with somebody who may happen to come or with a special messenger tomorrow morning or this evening Amidst patients I am carrying on as best as I can for the day. Workers from Kathiawar may be invited if Sardar gives 12th/13th to Narandas. Intimate to him whatever Sardar wishes.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

Somebody will be going there as I shall of course have some post to send.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N 11494

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Purushottamdas Thakurdas", p 280

448. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 5, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

You should not expect any letter from me for some time now Mira and Nanavati have been seriously ill. I have to spend the whole day in nursing them. Jamna[1] too should not expect a letter from me.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M.U /II . Also C.W 8508 Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

449 LETTER TO CHHAGANLAL JOSHI

October 5, 1936

CHI. CHHAGANLAL,

I got your explanation concerning Jaisukhlal. I am completely satisfied. I have received complaints against you from many sources. I have however not believed most of them. Those that I believed I have discussed with you I shall send your letter to Jaisukhlal.[2]

I have received a long reply from Chandulal Reply to his letter directly. Or better still, send your letter to me so as to avoid the necessity of making a copy.

It seems certain now that we shall be meeting, although I should like to run away on the very same day that I arrive there.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 5541

[1] Addressee's wife

[2] *Vide* "Letter to Jaisukhlal Gandhi", p. 358

450. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

[*October 5, 1936*][1]

CHI. MAHADEV,

Just as I was about to send with Prahlad all the accompanying matter having finished it all, I got your gun-shot; but it has misfired I had a hearty laugh when I read your message. Nowadays we don't have any occasions to laugh. I had no idea that my Note[2] contained any criticism of you. Even when Mirabehn drew my attention to it I told her, "What can Mahadev do?" Cancel my Note and send in yours. Why should I have to insist on anything? For my part I can manage even if nothing is issued. A similar mistake has occurred in the current number too, which I am not at all going to correct. I have in me a far greater strength to let such things pass than you might imagine. However, you are after all a poet and that too with a sensitive skin; so you are easily upset. Where can I have the remedy for this? It would have been enough, had you only asked, 'How if we draft the Note like this?' Why did you have to make an issue of it? But that is that. "Old habits die hard." It is useless to plead on Lilavati's behalf Her coming up here has crowned her faults. However, why didn't she promptly take charge of him[3] when he fell ill? The fact is she is crushed under the weight of sympathy she gets.

Look here, don't you take offence again. If I haven't said the right thing you should correct me but never feel hurt.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I am sending McArrison's speech, which may be included as it is after deleting the first paragraph.

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N. 11492

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Mahadev Desai", p. 351 and p. 354, and "Letter to Lilavati Asar", pp 357-8

[2] Perhaps this is a reference to "A Correction", pp. 362-3.

[3] Prabhu Dayal, *vide* the following item.

451. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 6, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending herewith the letters that I wrote last night. Even today Nanavati's fever has not gone and he is noticeably weak. Balwantsinha has normal temperature. Mirabehn has suffered an attack again and her illness seems to go deeper. She has some kind of a sore on her nipple. She is bed-ridden.

The last blow dealt by Lilavati has hurt me very much. I never thought that she would forget anyone lying ill before her eyes. My impression has been that you encourage her. Why didn't you yourself put her in charge of Prabhu Dayal? Kanu had been keeping a vigil throughout the night. Bhansali happened to visit at 3 in the morning and he then relieved Kanu. This much Kanu told me when I wrote to him and inquired. He also said that she wasted a good deal of your time talking. But I felt she had a number of complaints. You should learn them from her as I don't have the time and am, moreover, as good as dumb. She will not benefit from undeserved pity. Her trouble lies deep within her. She herself says that she has never submitted herself to any rules.

Again my stock of envelopes is exhausted Why not send me eight packets of them? I have had to send a few letters without envelopes I need no postcards.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S.N. 11493

452. LETTER TO S. AMBUJAMMAL

October 6, 1936

CHI. AMBUJAM,[1]

Your letter. I am getting a regular supply of fruit from you. You must let me know the price. If the fruit is dear I must not have it from you. I must get it from where it is cheap even when it is a gift. I have three sick-beds just now.

Your argument is both sound and unsound I would have the hospital in preference to superstition. But there is a middle way—to have intelligent home treatment and then await the result with confidence. Even kings have to die. Thousands die in hospitals. It is all a toss. The key to life is in God's hands. We can but explore His laws and obey them. And I do not expect a time when every villager who wishes can have good hospital treatment. But I do expect a time when he can have at his door competent advice. But even that time is far off.

I hope you are all well.

Love.

BAPU

From the original. Ambujammal Papers. Courtesy. Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

[1] This is in Hindi.

453. LETTER TO NANDALAL BOSE

October 6, 1936

DEAR NANDLAL BABU,

Just a line to thank you for your letter and to tell you I shall be at your disposal on 13th instant. You will please wire to Mahadev when you are coming.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. G.

SHRI NANDLAL BOSE
C/O RABINDRANATH TAGORE
6 DWARKANATH TAGORE LANE
JORASANKO, CALCUTTA

From a photostat C.W. 9778

454. LETTER TO GLADYS OWEN

October 6, 1936

MY DEAR GLADYS[1],

I was glad to receive your good wishes.

You are a bad woman to have free days just when I am to be away. I leave here on 22nd and do not return till 5th Nov. I am in Kashi on 24th and 25th [October][2]. Tell me when you can come.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: G.N. 6193

[1] The addressee was a teacher in the Theosophical Society School, Banaras.

[2] The source has "November".

455. LETTER TO RAIHANA TYABJI

October 6, 1936

MY DEAR RAIHANA,

Your touching letter. Of course I am with you and Mother. When I received your first letter I could not understand how Mother was reconciled to a mixed union at this stage of our society. I am sure Hamida is too good to resist Ammajan and you. I expect you have seen my letter[1] to her. I am now corresponding with Shankerlal and if necessary with Prabodha. Please keep me informed of developments if any.

Love.

BAPU

From a photostat: S.N. 9650

456. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 6, 1936

CHI. LILA,

Is it any less *lila* that from Lila you have become Lilavati again? What would have been my plight had you become Lili?[2] I like your decision. It was beyond your capacity to remain with me. I hope you will always carry my blessings with you wherever you are. You may certainly stay away from me but don't forget me altogether.

Your reason for leaving me is unusual. What do you ask to be forgiven for? Have you committed any fault? If you have, the proper atonement would be not to abandon me but to cling to me with greater resolve, to conduct yourself in conformity with it and show greater watchfulness. However, a correct decision, though taken for a wrong reason, is always welcome, and this applies to this decision of yours. Consult Mahadev in taking whatever step you may choose to take. Yesterday you could

[1] This is not traceable

[2] *Vide* p. 336.

see my anger, but couldn't you see my unbearable pain—couldn't you read my love?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 9349. Also C.W. 6624. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

457. LETTER TO JAISUKHLAL GANDHI

October 6, 1936

CHI. JAISUKHLAL,

I am enclosing with this the reply to your complaint. For my part, I fully believe Chhaganlal's denial, and my impression is that Narandas too believes it. Anyway he does not support you. Now it remains for you either to prove your charges against him or cleanse your own mind in the matter. Chhaganlal has his faults but, I trust, he is free from the ones you attribute to him.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati. M.M.U./III

458. LETTER TO H. L. SHARMA

October 6, 1936

CHI. SHARMA,

I have two patients on my own hands. They are both having fever. The temperature of one of them has now been below 99° for the last eight days and the other patient is at Simla. What will you do about such patients? Anyway there are many other patients as well. I hope everyone at home is all right.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a facsimile of the Hindi. *Bapuki Chhayamen Mere Jivanke Solah Varsh*, facing p. 260

459. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 6, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Herewith I am sending whatever post I could write as I don't know when I shall be able to finish it. Lilavati's decision is quite correct although she has added insult to injury She will never be happy with me. She needs to be guided for her future.

It seems the situation here has become very critical. Mirabehn has suffered a severe relapse. Her fever this time looks dangerous. Nanavati too is certainly not well enough. Inwardly he also seems to be losing hope. God's will be done.

The letters include a postcard to Nandalal Bose. It would be good if it goes with late fee paid.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S N 11495

460. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 8, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT AND REBEL COMBINED,

Your own blank paper returns to you duly filled. The magnifiers are already being used for various purposes examining patients as well as snakes I have two live specimens again.

Yes, Nanavati is with me—three beds going—Mira, Nanavati and Balwantsingh. The latter is free from fever. The other two cases are obstinate. Fever persists with ups and downs. They all require careful nursing. They are under water treatment and get fruit juices. No cause for anxiety as yet.

Of course there is as much illness in Simla as elsewhere and I was told when I came there for the first time that the place was notorious for venereal diseases. But those who choose can certainly benefit by its mountain air. Therefore if the climate agrees with you, you should stay as long as Shummy

wants you to. Village work in Manganwal[1] will take care of itself meanwhile.

When I go to Ahmedabad I shall see what can be done about the women's differences. But I hold out no hope. I know the state of affairs there. From what you tell me it seems that you never received any letter from Mridula[2] in reply to yours. And she told me definitely that she had written to you inviting you to her house.

Khan Saheb says it is enough that the girls seek and like your company. He says he is grateful to you for the open invitation you have given them. He does not want or expect you to give them lessons. Khan Saheb was never ill. I suggested an examination of his teeth and sent him to Nagpur. One tooth was extracted.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original C W 3748. Courtesy Amrit Kaur. Also G.N 6904

461. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 8, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I have your letter. You would be stable if you stayed with Mahadev; going to Nagpur is lack of stability. Therefore you had better stay with him; or at the Mahila Ashram if you can bear with the life there, though I am afraid you will not be able to. Be sure I have not given you up for lost.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N 9350. Also C.W 6625. Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

[1] A place in the Punjab
[2] Mridula Sarabhai

462. *TASK BEFORE HARIJAN SEVAKS*

Ever since the inauguration of the Harijan Sevak Sangh, the central organization has been feeding, very properly, the provincial branches. But the time has certainly arrived for the branches to stand on their own and be self-sustained, even though it may be at the sacrifice of part of their programme. The work in each province, and for that matter in each district or taluka, should be an unequivocal demonstration of active *savarna* support. For the chief mission of the Sangh is to touch the *savarna* heart and change it. Supposing the central organization had collected from two or three reformers a crore of rupees, and with it established branches all over India to cover it with schools and hostels for Harijan boys and girls, it would not have hastened the day of the doom of untouchability. For the *savarna* heart would remain as stony as ever. Supposing conversely that without the cost of a single pice, by some stroke of good fortune the *savarna* heart was changed and untouchability became a thing of the past, the whole object of the Sangh would be fulfilled. For in that case every public school, place of worship and other institutions would be open to Harijans precisely on the same terms as to caste Hindus. That day may be far off or much nearer than many people expect Anyway that is the goal of the Harijan Sevak Sangh and never the opening of separate schools, wells, temples and the like for Harijans and consequent perpetuation of untouchability. At present these things are undoubtedly done, but they are done only as a means to THE end. They have become necessary because the *savarna* heart is slow to change.

The growing number of reformers must not sit still and make protestations of removal of untouchability from themselves They must demonstrate that change by their visible conduct. The spending of their purse for the Harijan cause is a tangible proof of the change and therefore an essential part of the programme. But immediately it becomes a corner confined to a few individuals who salve their conscience by liberal donations, it ceases to be a token in the manner indicated by me. Hence it becomes a matter of duty for the Central Board to invite the attention of the branches to this fundamental part of the programme and for the branches to appreciate it and prepare the way to becom-

ing wholly self-reliant. Indeed the burden has been progressively thrown on provincial boards of financing their own institutions. But the time has come for definite and decisive action in the direction.

This change to full self-reliance will never come unless all the workers realize that this is essentially a religious movement. We are a nation spending lavishly for causes which the masses believe to be religious. One has only to go to the places of pilgrimage to have an ocular demonstration of the fact A study of the history of religious endowments will reveal the tragic story of fortunes being entrusted to them by credulous millions without ever caring to know how they were spent. It is enough for people to believe that they pay their mite to a cause which in their opinion is religious. Harijan workers have a cause that is wholly religious in the best sense of the term. If they have a living faith in it, if they do not move mountains they will at least get from their surroundings enough for the institutions in their charge.

Harijan, 10-10-1936

463 A CORRECTION

I know that *Harijan* contains almost always printer's errors It would be tedious, if not even pedantic, to issue corrections every week. In the difficult circumstances under which *Harijan* is being issued, the problem before me is to cease publication or to continue it in spite of mistakes recurring with unfailing regularity. I have chosen the latter course whilst a sufficient number of subscribers tolerate the errors. But the issue of 26th September contains two howlers in the article headed 'The Law of Our Being' which need correction:

Last para, ll. 2-4.

INCORRECT:

"The writer seems to poohpooh the idea of honour derived from individual and national gain."

CORRECT:

"The writer seems to poohpooh the idea of honour devoid of individual and national gain "

Last para, ll. 6-7.

INCORRECT:

"There is no question for one of self-destruction, voluntary or otherwise"

CORRECT:

"There is no question for me of self-destruction, voluntary or otherwise."

The errors seem to have originated in Wardha, the typist having misread the manuscript sent from Segaon.

Harijan, 10-10-1936

464. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 10, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

I have been obliged to neglect you these few days. My only comfort is that the correspondence has been practically suspended —all my time being given to the sick ones. I can't say they are yet on the mend. The temperature is slowly rising daily. There is no danger as yet. But both are very weak. They will be all right if they have enough vitality. Anyway neither they nor I have any anxiety. The C S.[1] was here today to examine them. They are having only water-cure.

I have just finished your broadcast [2]. Your experience of the village is excellently reproduced The other part is not well balanced

You say "old systems . . have perished" If they have, where is the cause for revival? But you yourself show later that they have at most decayed, not perished

And then you begin at the wrong end—build roads and houses!! Who can do the thing? Surely sanitation comes first.

We were agreed upon it too!! And *you* began with it. But how should [you] be Idiot, if you remembered such a very simple fact? And then you have not made a sharp division between what people can and should do themselves and what the State can and should. You do not want more than this, do you? And you are in no need of praise. Of that you must have had a surfeit

If you are only permitted to pass two months with me, I should hope to reconstruct your body. This eczema is certainly

[1] Civil Surgeon

[2] To village women

a source of anxiety from the medical standpoint. But I do not despair. Of course you won't go to Ahmedabad, if you are not quite fit.

The apples of late have been quite hardy and all in a good condi[tion]. You should tell me what the fruit costs each time and what the railage costs. The honey too came in quite safely. I finished the whole yesterday. It was quite nice.

I have not yet heard from Lionel.

Khan Saheb has all the fruit he can eat. I get apples from you and Ambujam—more than I need—*mosambis* from Bombay and oranges locally.

Love.

TYRANT

[PS]

Khan Saheb leaves for Delhi on 14th.

From the original: C.W. 3749. Courtesy: Amrit Kaur Also G N 6905

465. LETTER TO DEVDAS GANDHI

October 10, 1936

CHI. DEVDAS,

I am glad to learn that the whole line of thought has been Ba's own.[1] She certainly has that power, and the letter is indeed a good one. Dr. Mahmud writes a long letter which I am enclosing. Read it and tear it up. Am I to understand from the rather long letter you wrote that you can now write fairly well? The two patients take a good deal of my time, which I certainly like to give.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 2035

[1] *Vide* "Letter to Kasturba Gandhi", p. 345.

466. LETTER TO V. L. MEHTA

October 10, 1936

BHAI VAIKUNTH,

I heard only yesterday that Lallubhai[1] has fallen ill again. Things are bound to be all right where workers like you are available to look after him. I hope he is better now.

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I spoke to Shankerlal about the Agriculture Department.

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 1363

467. LETTER TO PRABHAVATI

October 10, 1936

CHI. PRABHA,

I have your letter. Of course, I do wish you to see me at Kashi, but the wish ought not to conflict with dharma. If you cannot be freed, or if you can be freed but Jayaprakash does not want it, then it would be improper for you to come and my desire that you should would be against dharma. I should be glad if, subject to these two conditions, you could come. I might even wish that you could be by my side at present! However, the wish would go contrary to dharma as your dharma at present is to do whatever service you can by remaining there. Both Mirabehn and Nanavati are laid up here. Both are very ill. You could be very helpful to me on the present occasion; but how can I entertain such a wish? That way, even Mahadev would prove helpful here. But wishing his presence here is against dharma. He has before him the dharma I have assigned to him. Such is the case with the others too. Have you now followed me on the question of wishing? Does God let us fulfil all our wishes?

I have been keeping good health amidst all this work. Such work has remained part of my nature to this day. God has always

[1] Lallubhai Shamaldas, addressee's father

kept me well while nursing the sick. I hope that this time too it will be so.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 3484

468. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
5 a.m., October 11, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I warn you lest you should prove all my fears right Do you think you are free from all restraints since you are released from the obligation of coming here? Have you stopped copying out the *slokas*? You do not mean that you will never be able to come here, do you? He who used to play on the *dilruba* is prostrate.[1] Shall I send it to you? Let me have a list also of your other belongings which are here so that I may send them to you, or you may come and collect them. Do as you think fit.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N 9351. Also C W 6626 Courtesy: Lilavati Asar

469. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 11, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I went through your letter carefully. Stick to your decision. Don't leave Bombay. Ask of me any help you need. Remain cheerful and do everything to recover your health. You may come to Segaon after recovering your health. Three-fourths of the people in this village are Harijans. Those attending on me are Harijans and they are enjoying themselves. You may serve them to your heart's content. Is there anything more that you want? Remember, however, that you will have to go back to Bombay if you fall ill. You are yourself responsible for your falling ill. Have your nails attended to.

[1] The reference is to Amritlal Nanavati, who was ill.

You must have got my letter of yesterday regarding Kanti. Kanti, you and I will all be happy if you willingly act on it. If you had been thinking of God as you have been thinking of me you would certainly have got your wish fulfilled. Do it even now. Forget me, forget Kanti and forget Saraswati. Think of God alone. This in no way means that you should abandon me or I should abandon you However, it does mean that you should give up your exaggerated notions of me and trust only God. You will surely have peace and happiness if you do this

There is sense in weeping for God while remembering Him, but in weeping for a man one only hurts one's eyes. You would stay patiently where you are if you would follow my advice.

Tell Vadud I am not writing to him separately. Even this I am writing after 8 p.m.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 357

470 *TALK WITH STUDENTS OF MARWADI VIDYALAYA*[1]

October 12, 1936

Gandhiji asked the students to be worthy of the Principal, Sjt. Aryanayakam, who at the invitation of Jamnalalji had agreed to take charge of the institution He had a distinguished career at Cambridge and London and later on at Santiniketan, and he has come to Wardha with his wife who is a great Sanskrit scholar and a distinguished graduate of the Banaras University She has been placed in charge of the Mahila Vidyalaya, also a creation of Jamnalalji. Gandhiji asked the boys to be not only worthy of the Principal, but of Jamnalalji . . . [He said]

He had long ago broken the bonds of sect and community and creed, and though the institution owed its existence to donations from Marwadis only—that is what gave it its name—Jamnalalji would not be satisfied until it was thrown open to boys of all castes and creeds. He has no interest until he had found his way to destroy its exclusive character, to throw it open as much to the Harijans as to any other section of Hindus, as much to the Mussalmans as to the

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" The Principal and the students came to see Gandhiji on his birthday which according to the Vikram calendar fell on October 12

Hindus. He has no room in his heart for untouchability, and he had none at all for any feeling that Hinduism is in any way superior to any other religion. He has helped Muslim institutions no less than he has done Hindu ones, and he has several Muslim friends whom he treats as blood-brothers. I would ask you students, Hindus and Muslims, to take a leaf from Jamnalalji's book and to have the same regard for one another's religion that Jamnalalji has, and to treat one another as blood-brothers. And let me tell you one thing which you may not know, and perhaps many do not know. This passion for removal of untouchability and freedom from communal feeling as well as equal regard for all religions, Jamnalalji does not at all owe to me. It is not possible for anyone to transfer his conviction to another. All one can do is to help another to manifest the conviction which is already in him But in respect of Jamnalalji, I could not take the credit for having even helped him to arrive at or to manifest those convictions in his life. He had the convictions in him long before he met me and he had lived up to them. It was these inner convictions of his that brought him and me together and made possible the close co-operation in which we have been able to work together for so many years. You children have to be worthy of a man like him.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

471. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

October 13, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letters, but the nursing of patients here leaves me no spare time. Nanavati and Mirabehn have been suffering from typhoid fever; somebody has to keep awake by their side day and night. I can hardly write a letter. By all means do go to Mecca Sharif if you get the required facilities and if your health permits.

If you recover your health somehow, it would indeed be an achievement. I continue to be well enough, though I have not taken my weight. There aren't the means.

I am enclosing a letter to Dr. Jivraj.[1] I am writing regarding Dr. Gilder also.

[1] The letter is not available.

Do not expect more letters for the present.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N. 358

472. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 13, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

When you have already placed your head at my feet, where is the question of forgetting?

I think that the article[1] should go as it is. We had better let him proclaim his dissatisfaction rather than anticipate his argument. There is no harm in letting the article go as it stands, for it is, according to me, a fine thing that the same old argument should have occurred to me involuntarily even today though I had forgotten the subject. Haven't I said before that I have no matter with me? I am certainly not sorry that I can spare no time from amidst the patients. All is well

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

You should derive full satisfaction from the services assigned to you.

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11496

473 LETTER TO PREMABEHN KANTAK

SEGAON,
October 14, 1936

CHI. PREMA,

I got your letter. You are flying high. All right fly. But see that you don't get exhausted and fall.

To my right and left are Mira's and Nanavati's sick-beds. Both are suffering from typhoid.

I have practically stopped attending to correspondence. But you certainly have my blessings for your camp which you have

[1] *Vide* "Ahimsa Conundrums", pp. 372-4.

asked for. I hope that being the servant you are, you will go on serving silently and without ostentation and regard service as its own reward.

I don't know anything about my having to go to Bombay. Even the visit to Ahmedabad has become uncertain now. I cannot leave Mira in her present condition. Nanavati, one may say, is on the road to recovery.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. G N 10385 Also C W 6824 Courtesy Premabehn Kantak

474. MESSAGE TO MILL-OWNERS' AND LABOUR ASSOCIATIONS[1]

[Before *October 15, 1936*][2]

The Mahatma says he is surrounded by two typhoid fever patients, nevertheless he is prepared to give two hours on October 21. He has to depart for Benares on 22nd if the patients are well enough.

The Bombay Chronicle, 16-10-1936

475. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

SEGAON,
October 16, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

Nobody brought the papers yesterday. I am sending two letters and also the telegrams herewith. Nanavati shows much improvement today; his temperature in the morning was 99°. Mira, too, may be said to have improved; she too had 101° after several days. Lilavati's clothes which I sent with someone must have reached there. Is there anything more left? If so, she should write to me so that I might find it. There is an entirely discoloured and tattered sari with big holes—is it hers? How is Bhansali?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S.N 11498

[1] The Mill-owners' and Labour Associations had requested Gandhiji to fix a convenient date for hearing the wage-cut question

[2] The report is date-lined "Ahmedabad, October 15".

476. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

October 16, 1936

MY DEAR IDIOT,

Since I have a free moment I must utilize it for a few words to you. The patients are doing well, though fever persists. How many villagers can go to hospitals? Both would have gone to the hospital if I had wanted them to I could not do so without denying my past and the recent article[1] I wrote. So long as God wants me to work on this earth in this body, He will take care of it. Not all the physicians in the world can save me when the hour strikes.

Love.

TYRANT

From the original. C.W. 3596 Courtesy: Amrit Kaur Also G N. 6405

477 LETTER TO VITHAL L. PHADKE

October 16, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

I cannot recall your earlier letter. For the present there is a mountain of letters before me as I lie between two sick-beds. As things stand at present, I am not to stay in Gujarat for more than three days. Sardar has the control of the programme there. You should write to Sardar though at the moment I don't feel like going anywhere. The rest if I find out your letter or if you write again How should I be able to say at this stage who in Ahmedabad would take how many minutes?

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G.N 3836

[1] *Vide* "Of My Recent Illness", pp 295-7

478. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 16, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

You seem to be deeply immersed in work. The fever still persists though it is slowly subsiding.

When can I go through the pile of the Sahitya Parishad papers? I am returning it after removing those about the constitution and the Chandravadan matter. If there is anything else that I should read, send it. Send me a copy of my programme. Very probably I shall have to go direct to Rajkot for a day, and from there Sardar may perhaps take me straight to Nadiad and I may reach Ahmedabad on the 30th afternoon or evening. Do mention that my Rajkot visit is only a family visit. From the present trend of things I see that you will be required to stay on at Segaon. The final programme will be known by Monday.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S.N. 11499

479. AHIMSA CONUNDRUMS

A college professor and two representatives of a class of fifty students write:[1]

> As you are no doubt aware, the Intermediate Prose Text-Book, Pearce and Aryatna's *Models of Comparative Prose*, used in most Intermediate Colleges in India this year, contains a selection about five pages long from your book *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. The selection is entitled "Ahimsa", and contains your discussion of this most challenging principle and its application to our lives
>
> The fifty students in my prose class, and I, their instructor, have been spending several class periods studying and discussing the above essay . . .
>
> At one point, however, both the students and I, their instructor, have been unable clearly to understand the precise nature of your

[1] Only extracts are reproduced here

views. I refer to your statement about the conduct of a votary of ahimsa in case of war, particularly the following passage[1]. "When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of ahimsa is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet whole-heartedly try to free himself, his nation, and the world from War." A little further on (discussing three methods of recourse in case of the European War, for yourself) " or I could participate in the war on the side of the Empire and thereby acquire the capacity and fitness for resisting the violence of war I lacked this capacity and fitness, so I thought there was nothing for it but for me to serve in the War"

We should be deeply and humbly grateful if you would expand and clarify this subject and your past and present views upon it .

I do not know that I need have suppressed the name of the college or the names of the signatories. The learned professor has sent me a stamped envelope for answer. This presumes a personal reply. But I have only limited time at my disposal especially when I am nursing two precious patients. I would not miss my weekly talk with the readers of *Harijan*. I am, therefore, with apologies to my correspondents, combining two purposes to save my time.

The question raised in the letter is of very great importance and has always caused me the greatest difficulty, not much in deciding upon the action to be taken at a given moment but in justifying my conduct in terms of ahimsa. For the same action may outwardly be taken by the believer and the unbeliever. At these times the motive alone decides its quality.

At the time of writing I have neither the text-book nor the original in Gujarati of which the text is a translation. But I have a recollection of what I wrote. What is more, so far as I am aware, my views on ahimsa, as I held them, remain the same today.

The general proposition that I laid down in the quotation was derived from my conduct during the European War. I had thrown myself whole-heartedly into it at the peril of my life—not because of the risks attendant upon serving at such times, but because at the time I was attending drills and camps I was suffering from pleurisy and general weakness as I had hardly regained the strength I had lost during an exhausting fourteen days' fast I had undertaken two or three

[1] *Vide* Vol. XXXIX, pp. 279-80.

months before the War. I believed then the British Empire to be on the whole a system beneficial to humanity. I had dreamt of one day converting it to methods of peace instead of war for the sake even of its own existence though in another form. But I was fully conscious of my limitations. I was an insignificant atom ineffective for resistance to its general policy Whether I joined the War or not, I was helplessly party to it, inasmuch as I ate the food protected by the British fleet I was enjoying personal liberty too under its protection. If, therefore, I helped the War somehow or other, I felt that for me as a votary of ahimsa, it was better to take a direct part in it so as to enable me the sooner to end War It is quite possible that all this was argument of the weak and that if I felt that war was an evil, I should have gone away from it even if it meant starvation or a rebel's death. Anyway I did not think so then, nor do I now.

It is wholly beside the argument what my attitude would now be, seeing that I no longer believe in the Empire as on the whole a beneficent power.

To illustrate my answer, let me take another argument from my own life. Even when I was a little urchin my heart and intellect rebelled against untouchability But being then an insignificant member of the family I acquiesced in their conduct towards Harijans which I should not do now. Needless to say, I could not then have argued out my conduct. My personal belief did not appear to me to be inconsistent with my living in the family.

Indeed life is made of such compromises. Ahimsa, simply because it is purest, unselfish love, often demands such compromises. The conditions are imperative. There should be no self in one's action, no fear, no untruth, and it must be in furtherance of the cause of ahimsa. The compromise must be natural to oneself, not imposed from without.

I should not at all wonder if my answer has given no satisfaction to the professor and his pupils. I must be pardoned for the constant reference to my own actions. The reason is obvious. I am not a well-read man in any sense of the term. All I know of ahimsa is in the first instance derived from my own experiences and experiments carried on in broad daylight in a humble scientific spirit and in the fear of God which is Truth.

Harijan, 17-10-1936

480. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

SEGAON,
October 18, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I understand your lamentations. I would have sent for you even today if I could have the courage. However, have patience When I return from my journey, I shall accommodate you at Segaon You may also stay at Segaon if I leave Mahadev behind. If both of us go, you may go to Rajkot and join us the day we leave Ahmedabad.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G N. 9583. Also C.W. 6555 Courtesy Lilavati Asar

481. LETTER TO RAMESHWARDAS PODDAR

October 18, 1936

CHI. RAMESHWARDAS,

I like the scheme sent by Parnerkar for the Goseva section at the Exhibition. I think it would be proper for you to shoulder its expense around Rs. 1,300 to Rs. 1,500 if it is not too much for you. Not more than Rs. 5,000 is to be taken from the Congress Committee for the entire exhibition.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi. G N 173

482. LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1936

MY DEAR MAHMOOD,

Two precious patients have stopped all my usual correspondence. I am writing this under great stress I have not much to say in defence of my attitude on Hindi-Hindustani. I fear you do not know the whole history. Moulana Abdul Haq has given a distorted picture. I entered the Hindi Sammelan not only a year ago It is now nearly ten years that I was first invited to preside at their conference.[1] I pleaded then for recognition of Urdu as part of Hindi. The views I then pronounced I held even before 1908. I went a step further and got a definition accepted at the Indore Conference a year ago which included Urdu speech and script[2] That is the *fons et origo* of my crime. Did you know all this? If you did, what is it you do not understand? Is it a fault that I could not accept for that meeting either Hindi-Urdu or merely Hindustani? I have dealt with that question fairly fully in *Harijan*[3] Please read these and then if you do not feel convinced, write to me fully and I shall strive with you. I should despair of myself if I cannot carry conviction to you on an issue which appears to me to be perfectly simple.

Love.

BAPU

DR. MAHMOOD, BAR-AT-LAW
CHHAPRA
BIHAR

From a photostat: G.N. 5079. Also the manuscript of Mahadev Desai's Diary Courtesy. Narayan Desai

[1] Gandhiji presided over the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan at Indore on March 29, 1918; *vide* Vol XIV, pp. 292-7.

[2] *Vide* Vol. LX, pp 443-50.

[3] *Vide* Vol LXII, pp. 383-5 and 408-9

483. LETTER TO NARANDAS GANDHI

October 19, 1936

CHI. NARANDAS,

I am returning the pamphlet after correcting it. I shall give you the exact date in my next letter.

It would not be correct to see Jawaharlalji[1] during the lecture I would certainly see him if he would grace us with a visit. The timings both for the spinning sacrifice as well as for the prayers, are quite all right Arrange Khan Saheb's interview with the Muslim brethren. You may arrange another gathering for meeting all the people, if possible, that is, if all wish it. I shall not be able to attend it There is no harm if nothing can be arranged for Khan Saheb. Whatever is done should be spontaneous.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M U /II. Also C W 8509. Courtesy Narandas Gandhi

484 LETTER TO MANILAL AND SUSHILA GANDHI

October 19, 1936

CHI. MANILAL AND SUSHILA,

I liked the letters from you both. Manilal, it was your dharma to have pointed out my shortcoming which you did, nor was it indecorous. Filial piety consists in respect for parents in spite of one's knowledge of their shortcomings. In that test none of you fail, barring Harilal. But the fault is not entirely Harilal's For how could we hold him responsible for what he does or says under the influence of drink?

I shall not write a long reply as I am surrounded by patients. Mirabehn as well as Nanavati are better today. I do not repent for the kind of education I gave you brothers. I should have been glad if I could have done more along the same lines. I offered you at the altar of my sacrifice, not unmindful of your well-being but knowing it fully well Nor

[1] A Jain sadhu

do I believe the result has been unhappy. There was a special purpose in sending Sorabji.[1] He achieved it too; we could have seen it had he lived As for Chhaganlal[2], he was sent to prepare himself for a specific task. It miscarried because he was threatened with tuberculosis and left England abruptly. How do you forget about Ritch[3] and Polak[4]? There was a purpose in sending them and there was one also in not sending you brothers By, the time you had reached the age of discretion my infatuation with Western education had worn away. It was not that I did not provide you such education for want of money. The Doctor's[5] purse was always at my disposal. When Ritch was sent I too was in a position to meet the cost However, I purposely moulded you in the school of experience and drafted you for public service. I understand how you might regret the want in view of the present times, but that does not change my thinking Don't you know that I have done the same with the boys and girls that came to be placed in my charge here too? I am not worried that Radha, Keshu, Shankar, Bal, Jayanti, Kanti, etc. rebelled against it. I see in it the force of the current stream and not any defect in my thinking. The best of workers here have no Western education, and men like Mahadev who have it are with me not because of it but because of their other qualities. I do of course make use of Mahadev's education by the way, but that is of no great significance. It may be my efficiency. Mahadev will himself admit that Maganlal was more valuable than he. How many educated men do you think there are in my army?. To what position would I have been reduced had I depended on them? Don't you know that I had a hand in sending Joseph, both the Godfreys and Bernard? Where are they? What have they achieved? I also know the art of producing barristers and doctors, but it has borne no fruit. I think you brothers were spared the wild goose chase. Why can you not see my non-violence in the exceptions I made in the cases of West[6] and Sam[7]? Had I not been generous to them, how could I have accommodated them

[1] *Vide* Vol. XI, p 333.
[2] Chhaganlal Gandhi
[3] L W Ritch, *vide* Vol IV, p. 370
[4] H S L Polak
[5] Dr. Pranjivan Jagjivan Mehta
[6] A. H West
[7] Govindaswami, *vide* Vol. IV, p 432.

and others like them? You know that I encouraged Kitchin[1] to eat meat when he was ill and, as a result, he gave it up altogether. In the Boer War I myself served wine to the stone-breakers in my corps and served *bidis* to others. Discretion is very necessary in doing all such things. Generosity to others is as necessary as strictness with oneself

I have dilated far more than I had intended. You need not send anything to Kanti as Devdas has undertaken to pay all his expenses.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 4858

485. LETTER TO BALVANTRAI K. THAKORE

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 19, 1936

BHAISHRI BALVANTRAI[2],

I am at present busy nursing patients. I finished your letter little by little yesterday evening. I have no idea what I would be able to do in Ahmedabad I regard myself quite unfit to preside over the Conference. Being a Mahatma, perhaps, I am supposed to know all things. Would you send your suggestions in the form of an amendment? I should be glad to meet you, but how could there be such an occasion? After all I am not visiting Bombay. I shall be wandering into Ahmedabad.

I expect you are in good health.

Vandemataram from
MOHANDAS

[PS.]

Your letter shall remain confidential. I hav

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N 9238

[1] H Kitchin
[2] (1869-1952); Gujarati poet and man of letters

486. LETTER TO BENARSIDAS CHATURVEDI

October 19, 1936

BHAI BENARSIDAS,

Prabhu Dayal gave me the news of your brother's death. You are a man of knowledge and therefore hardly need to be consoled We all have to go the same way as Ramnarayan, the only difference being in time. Why then should we grieve over it? But with the passing away of our loved ones, our responsibility increases and yours has grown heavily. God alone is our true help at such times. He alone can guide you.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Hindi: G.N. 2516

487. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 19, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I can say that I have done a fair amount of writing today. Baba has done a great thing. Mira's temperature today has been 98° and it has not risen so far. She however continues to be restless. There is no release of saliva in her mouth. It remains sticky and she has no wish to take glucose or even fruit. There is something else too. I want no oranges or lemons Munnalal made a mistake in sending for the lemons.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S.N. 11500

488. LETTER TO AMRIT KAUR

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 21, 1936

MY DEAR REBEL,

You have certainly provided me with excellent material for *Harijan*.[1] Mahadev will see your letter. I shall make judicious use of portions of it. You must then do a little propaganda work, even write to the papers and invite other women to do likewise. If you women would only realize your dignity and privilege, and make full use of it for mankind, you will make it much better than it is. But man has delighted in enslaving you and you have proved willing slaves till the slaves and the slave-holders have become one in the crime of degrading humanity My special function from childhood, you might say, has been to make woman realize her dignity. I was once slave-holder myself but Ba proved an unwilling slave and thus opened my eyes to my mission. Her task was finished. Now I am in search of a woman who would realize her mission. Are you that woman, will you be one?

If Shummy will be happy and healthy going to Europe and won't go without you, why should you not accompany him? No time for more. Gave you a long letter yesterday.[2]

Love.

TYRANT

[PS.]

Yes, you should write to Natesan without doubt.

From the original: C W 3597. Courtesy Amrit Kaur Also G N 6406

[1] *Vide* Vol LXIV, "Obscene Advertisements", 14-11-1936.

[2] The letter is not traceable.

489. LETTER TO LILAVATI ASAR

October 21, 1936

CHI. LILA,

I have been thinking of you, though I have been unable to write to you of late. Are you aware, or aren't you, that you have taken upon yourself a much greater burden by asking to be released from the conditions? You do not intend to become a self-indulgent person! Yon have self-control and you want to make progress in that direction. Take it that if you forget this, you will have invited perpetual discord.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati S N 11757

490. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 21, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

I am sending some post. Rajkumari's letter, which I send you, is for you to read. It should be returned as I shall want it for *Harijan*. Next week it is going to be a question what to write and what not to write. Both the patients are fine—subnormal. Mırabehn's complaint has toned down today. I give her curds.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati. S N 11501

491. LETTER TO MAHADEV DESAI

October 21, 1936

CHI. MAHADEV,

You may send a wire to Shivprasad[1], also stating who are coming with me. Take it for certain that you will be there. The accompanying is for Raja.[2] Write to S. saying that I have written to Raja.

I can't see how I may write on Premchandji[3]. If we suggest it to Viyogi Hari, he might draft a brief note. We take no editorial notice of men of letters. Lallubhai's[4] case, however, deserves to be considered For my part, I propose to leave here at six o'clock. No arrangements need be made from there. The luggage will be carried in the cart from here. I shall walk as much as I can, I am feeling strong enough. I shall climb onto the cart if I feel it necessary. On my way I shall stop to look at Kamala's[5] son. I shall peep into Maganwadi if there is time. You may if you wish suggest any change in this. The patients are fine.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: S N. 11502

492. LETTER TO RADHAKRISHNA BAJAJ

October 22, 1936

CHI. RADHAKISAN,

I heard the news about Vinay[6]. It will be good if Kamala whom I very much wish to see comes here If I go there myself I should have to run away in a few minutes since here I shall be busy working till 5 o'clock. There is no reason for

[1] Shivprasad Gupta
[2] The letter is not traceable
[3]&[4] Who had recently died
[5] Kamala Nevatia, Jamnalal Bajaj's daughter
[6] Kamala Nevatia's son

Kamala to confine herself where she is. Read this letter to Kamala if you think it proper and send her or bring her yourself.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N 9121

493. STATEMENT TO THE PRESS

WARDHAGANJ,
October 22, 1936

As usual I am overwhelmed with messages of birthday greetings It is impossible for me to send acknowledgments to these kind friends I, therefore, take this opportunity for thanking them all through the Press for their good wishes.

The Bombay Chronicle, 23-10-1936

494. LETTER TO AMTUSSALAAM

SEGAON, WARDHA,
October 23, 1936

CHI. AMTUL SALAAM,

I got your letter just now. I had Kanti's letter expressing his happiness on the Rentia Baras Day. It is not worth sending to you I don't bother him since he has no time to spare.

It is good that you went to hospital. Khurshedbehn had written to me. I should of course be glad if you helped her

I myself never undertake a pilgrimage. There is so much hypocrisy prevailing in places of pilgrimage. I know several persons who have been to Mecca Sharif. I couldn't see that they had regained health by going there. But since you have the faith, why should I stop you? By all means go, and return more firm of mind, healthier and (free from attachment). What more need I say?

I am leaving for Kashi today. I shall spend two days there and then a few hours in Rajkot. I reach Ahmedabad on the 30th. The patients here are now free from fever. Get well soon.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati G N. 359

495. TALK WITH AN ENGLISHMAN[1]

[Before *October 24, 1936*]

A friendly Englishman asked Gandhiji the other day a question which rather surprised me "You are a Gujarati, you belong to Gujarat Why should you have selected a Marathi-speaking part for your work and experiments? And why Wardha of all places?" Gandhiji was no less surprised, but he calmly replied

I do not belong to Gujarat, I belong to the whole of India. Wardha I selected because it afforded so many facilities for work. There is Jamnalal Bajaj who is interested in my programme of work and my experiments, and he gave me his valuable garden and his garden-house for the Village Industries Association of which I made Wardha the headquarters.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

496. ALL-ROUND RISE?

Sri Krishnadas Gandhi of Maharashtra Charkha Sangh informs me that the rise in the spinners' wage has necessitated a rise in the twisters' wage Experiments are therefore now being made how without raising the price of khadi the efficiency of the twister can be raised so as to enable her to make 3 as. per day. He has therefore started using the double spindle Magan Rentiyo for the purpose. If all the workers engaged in khadi production will work with the spirit that fires Krishnadas Gandhi and a few such workers, we shall attain the ideal rise in wages in all the departments of khadi without putting an undue strain upon the consumers' purse. And if we succeed in giving the full wage to all the khadi artisans, we should have no difficulty in reaching the level for all other village industries. What is needed is a scientific spirit that will take nothing for granted, that will brook no laziness of body or mind, that will have an undying faith in its mission All work is dead without faith.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

497. *BUFFALO* v. *COW*

Those who are engaged in saving the cow from the swift destruction that awaits her if measures are not taken betimes to save her, are often confronted with the question whether, apart[1] from the religious sentiment, the buffalo is not the cheaper animal to keep. As a layman I have always hazarded the opinion that the cow is the cheaper to keep, at any rate in the long run, that it is impossible to save the two animals, and that if we would but concentrate attention on saving the cow, the buffalo will take care of herself. But if the cow goes, the buffalo will never be able to take the cow's place and the struggling, starving farmer will have in the deprivation of the cow and her male progeny a handicap that will leave him prostrate. Those who are interested in this important problem will get some help from the following opinion[2] of Sardar Datar Singh M.D.D. (Eng.) of the Montgomery Dairy Farm sent to me by a friend.

Harijan, 24-10-1936

498. *LETTER TO MARGARETE SPIEGEL*[3]

ON THE TRAIN,
October 24, 1936

CHI. AMALA,

Mira and Nanavati had been ill, and so the delay in replying.[4] They are now better. I am on my way to Benares. I return to Segaon about 5th November. I reach Ahmedabad on 30th and [shall] be there for four days at least. I hope you understand my corrections. Of course you need

[1] The source has "even apart"

[2] Not reproduced here It gave reasons why the buffalo was not an economical animal.

[3] This was in reply to the addressee's letter dated October 1, 1936, written in Gujarati.

[4] This sentence is in Gujarati

milk and butter and so do you need fruit. Take it as medicine to save more expenses.

Love.

BAPU

Spiegel Papers Courtesy Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

499. LETTER TO JETHALAL G. SAMPAT

ON THE TRAIN TO KASHI,
October 24, 1936

CHI. JETHALAL,

I have had no free time, as I was busy nursing Mirabehn and Nanavati. Now they are better. I have found some time in the train as I am going to Kashi I have read your letters I have decided to write to the Home Member myself. Let us see what happens. I shall write in *Harijan* also at the opportune moment I could never abandon this thing.

You can certainly bring the craftsmen to the Exhibition. But the expenses for bringing them will have to be borne by you. It has been decided not to spend more than Rs. 5,000 for the Exhibition this time and so all who come will meet their own expenses The Committee will bear the expenses of their lodging and boarding If there is any profit after these expenses are met, it will be distributed among those who would have incurred the expenses If you bring any tools or have them made, I shall arrange for their sale up to Rs 200 at a profit of 20 per cent over their cost price. This would give you a net profit of Rs. 40 I am interested in testing the strength of the Gandhi tools. I am of course making other arrangements. You must also find out what is possible at Jalgaon and other places. How can I have the time for it?

Blessings from
BAPU

[PS.]

I shall return to Segaon between 5th and 9th November.

From the Gujarati original C W 9857. Courtesy. Narayan J. Sampat

500. SPEECH AT BHARAT MATA MANDIR, BANARAS[1]

October 25, 1936

The temple contains no image of any god or goddess It has only a relief map of India made of marble stone in it. I hope this temple, which will serve as a cosmopolitan platform for people of all religions, castes and creeds including Harijans, will go a great way in promoting religious unity, peace and love in the country.[2]

I can hardly express my sentiments in declaring open this shrine. I have left Segaon, and my dear patients and my work in the village, to come to Kashi in obedience to the irresistible call of love—love which, in Saint Mirabai's language, is as soft and fragile as a weak thread, but as strong as life itself. It draws men together from thousands of miles, and I could not possibly resist Shivprasad's affection I am in no way worthy of opening the shrine, but Shivprasad's affection has made me forget my limitations.[3] Babu Shivprasad lives on the bank of the Ganga which purifies his body, but even in his heart flows another Ganga—that of emotion and imagination. One can fly on the wings of emotion and imagination right up to Heaven, and also sink to hell when they are unhealthy. Shivprasad's pure and noble imagination has prompted him to think of the shrine of Mother India and to dedicate a portion of his wealth to its making. In the temple about to be opened he has given a concrete shape to his imagination which he conceived in Prof. Karve's Home for Widows.[4] He rallied craftsmen, sculptors and engineers who could appreciate his sentiment. There was a time

[1] Gandhiji performed the opening ceremony in the afternoon before a vast gathering of over 25,000 people which included Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, Jains, Buddhists and Harijans from all parts of the country.

[2] This paragraph is from *The Bombay Chronicle*

[3] *The Bombay Chronicle* report here has "Gandhiji added that he was not fit to perform the opening ceremony of the temple, but as Pandit Malaviya's blessings were with him he set his hands to it".

[4] Shivprasad Gupta had seen a relief map of India at Karve's Home for Widows in Poona

when he had despaired of life, but God has enabled him to live to see his dream take shape.[1]

As I was asked to perform the opening[2] ceremony in the morning, and as I listened to the chanting of the Vedic *mantras*, I thought of a verse in our morning prayer which we have been repeating now for 20 years. 'Mother Earth, Spouse of Vishnu, ocean-clad and mountain-breasted, I bow to Thee. Forgive me the touch of my feet.' It is this Mother Earth to the service and devotion of which we are dedicating ourselves today. The Mother who gave us birth was bound to die some day, not so the Universal Mother who bears and sustains us. She must die some day, but when she passed away she would take all her children also along with her. She therefore demands a life-long dedication. Shivprasad had dedicated this shrine for the worship by all, irrespective of creed. He had imposed no conditions whatsoever Everyone who loved Mother India was welcome to the shrine to offer his or her worship according to his or her light and capacity. Therefore, I could not resist Shivprasad's affectionate summons. Let us all forget our divisions and differences, sacrifice them at her feet and bring the purest of our service to her. Shivprasad's dream has, thank God, been realized. May God also be pleased to fulfil his heart's desire—the ceasing of the strife of all warring creeds and opinions and interests and may He let him live long enough to see the fulfilment.

Harijan, 31-10-1936, *Harijanbandhu*, 1-11-1936, and *The Bombay Chronicle*, 26-10-1936

501. SPEECH AT BANARAS

October 25, 1936

It strikes me as peculiarly inappropriate to ask a man like me to make this presentation[3] I am wholly unfit for the task.[4] I am neither a Hindi scholar nor a poet. I do not even like

[1] This paragraph is from the Gujarati in *Harijanbandhu* What follows is from the "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*

[2] The source has "colsing"

[3] Of a commemoration volume to Maithilisharan Gupta who had completed his fiftieth year

[4] This sentence is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*, 31-10-1936

celebrating jubilees of great or small people. If we must celebrate somebody's jubilee we should do so when he is no more among us.

I regard it as peculiarly inappropriate if not impertinent for people to present great men with a book of what I should call certificates of merit I therefore refused to contribute anything to the Commemoration Volume; but the word Mahatma covers a multitude of disqualifications and so, I suppose, I was asked to present the Volume. It is my innermost conviction that a man cannot be called a poet or a Mahatma or an avatar so long as he is alive.[1]

Ramchandraji was not considered an avatar during his lifetime. Tulsidas's birth anniversary was not celebrated when he was living

It is we who have made them avatars. After all the *Gita* maxim, "To work thou hast the right, not to the fruit thereof", applies peculiarly to poets and Mahatmas. I should therefore have a bone to pick with Maithilisharanji if he were to believe that he was a great poet of India [2]

So this anniversary should have been celebrated when the Poet was no more. People would have then known that something was being done for honouring him. You will please forgive me. When Padmanarayanji came to Segaon I told him that it was not decent to go about collecting opinions on a reputed poet. Such a poet's work does not call for an expression of opinions. If ever I had delivered myself of an opinion on Gurudev or Malaviyaji or Dwivediji, it was always under pressure. If you ask me, I have never felt like writing about great men.

The fact that I did so on former occasions is no reason why I should repeat the mistake. If you also press me I might write something for you too, but not willingly. I know Maithilisharanji very well. Even if I refused to write about him he would not misunderstand me. I had the honour of having his hospitality in Chirgaon.

A poet writes under inspiration and not to the dictation of any one. He therefore does not write for applause. His work is its own joy and compensation.[3]

[From Hindi]

Sampadakke Pachchis Varsh, p 86, and *Harijan*, 31-10-1936

[1], [2]&[3] These paragraphs are from *Harijan*.

502. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

KASHI,
October 26, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

I have not been able to write to you before now. I have just got good news from Munnalal about you both.[1] I hope you are well both in mind and body. It is a matter of joy that our weaknesses exhibit themselves as a warning to us. Therefore the memory of the last day's incident should bring you joy only.

Prabha is here.

Love.

BAPU

From the original: C.W. 6366. Courtesy: Mirabehn. Also G.N. 9832

503. LETTER TO AMRITLAL T. NANAVATI

October 26, 1936

CHI. AMRITLAL,

I just got the wire about you. Keep growing day after day. Do write to me.

Kakasaheb is here. Take up the *dilruba* when your strength returns.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 10721

[1] The reference is to the illness of Mirabehn and Amritlal Nanavati.

504. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

October 26, 1936

CHI. MUNNALAL,

Your telegram came at the expected time. Be patient in all that you do. There my [1]

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 8594. Also C.W. 7002. Courtesy: Munnalal G. Shah

505. LETTER TO MOTILAL ROY[2]

IN A MOVING TRAIN,
October 26, 1936

DEAR MOTI BABU,

I had your affectionate wire as also your letter about the debt. Neither you nor I can afford to be satisfied till the whole debt is paid. I send you for your consideration the latest letter from Annada Babu. It is [a][3] serious matter if the khadi delivered has not been priced at the market rate. And how should you ask for a certificate till the debt is discharged or a settlement arrived at to the satisfaction of the Council?

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a photostat: G.N. 11047

[1] Illegible in the source
[2] Of the Pravartak Sangh
[3] In the source the letter is damaged here.

506. LETTER TO EDMOND AND YVONNE PRIVAT

As at Segaon, Wardha,
C. P., India,
October 26, 1936

DEAR BHAKTI AND ANAND,

Your dear letter has just come into my hands. You need not have included yourselves among those to whom my appeal for sparing me was addressed Letters from informal friends and co-workers like you living in distant lands are always welcome.

That you cannot come again to India owing to your duty keeping you there is no cause for regret. Where hearts are one, physical separation is of no moment

Truth and ahimsa are truer than many so-called scientific facts. Only they are difficult to put into practice. And then too, they are not so difficult as they seem if there is the proper previous preparation But we do not care to give this most important thing in life more than a part of our leisure hours. Our valuations need revising.

Mira, of whose serious illness you must have read, is out of the wood. She is still weak.

This is being written in a moving train

Love to you both.

Bapu

From a photostat: G N. 2338

507. LETTER TO MIRABEHN

On the Train,
October 28, 1936

CHI. MIRA,

This is my 2nd letter[1] during travelling and only to tell you that you are never out of my mind. Hope the progress of both continues.

[1] The first having been written on October 26

I had a very busy day in Delhi doing quiet work. Ba is with us. Manu remaining with Devdas. It is delightfully cool in Delhi just now. Devdas is much better.

Love.

BAPU

[PS.]

Tomorrow Rajkot. 30th Ahmedabad.

From the original C W 6367 Courtesy Mirabehn Also G N 9833

508. *LETTER TO SYED MAHMUD*

ON THE TRAIN,
October 28, 1936

MY DEAR MAHMUD,

This is being written in a moving train. I hope you got my previous letter[1] written to you on a cursory glance at your note. Now I have read it carefully. There is one very big historical error in it. You will evidently think that the vast majority of Mussalmans are immigrants and their descendants. The truth is just the opposite. The vast majority are converts and their descendants and therefore inheritors of the Vedic civilization and culture. And why should not the immigrants take pride in the achievements of the ancestors of the original inhabitants? Your note contains several other glaring inaccuracies and faulty conclusions or inferences. I detect much haste in its preparation. I wish I had time to point out these. But I have no time You should reread your note and perhaps you will detect some errors yourself.

To conclude, I should even now refuse to go to heaven without Mussalmans nor has my effort for unity abated in any way. Only my method is different but deeper and more substantial. The result is in God's lap.

Love

BAPU

From a photostat: G N 5078

[1] *Vide* p. 376.

509. LETTER TO KANU GANDHI

ON THE TRAIN, PALANPUR,
October 28, 1936

CHI KANAIYO,

Of all your fellow-students you alone seem to have remained firm so far. I believe that you have thereby lost nothing whatever. May God grant you the strength to remain firm for ever. May you live long.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a microfilm of the Gujarati M M U /II

510. LETTER TO MUNNALAL G. SHAH

ON THE TRAIN,
October [2][1]*8, 1936*

CHI. MUNNALAL,

All of you must be working without strain Both of you men are, I trust, cheerful Yesterday I waited for your letter and telegram in Delhi but neither came. Now I shall see what I hear from you at Rajkot. I am not writing separately to Nanavati today

Balwantsinha must be doing well and I expect you both have mixed as well with each other as milk and sugar

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati· G N 8593 Also C W 7001. Courtesy Munnalal G. Shah

[1] This digit is illegible in the source Gandhiji was at Delhi on the 27th. This was evidently written the next day

511. ADDRESS TO HARIJAN WORKERS[1]

RAJKOT,
October 29, 1936

Gandhiji said to them that in view of cases of impurity of Harijan workers having come to his notice, he had been confirmed in his conviction that no Harijan ashrams should look to the central office for any financial help; that they may be, if they would, under the discipline and control of the Central Body, and that the impurity had so far alarmed him that he had not the courage to ask individuals to support these institutions financially. It was the clearest duty of those in charge of these institutions to put the public at ease about the purity of the institutions before they approached them for financial help

Harijan, 7-11-1936

512. SPEECH AT VITHAL KANYA VIDYALAYA HOSTEL, NADIAD[2]

October 30, 1936

I ought not to have been asked to speak on this occasion, inasmuch as my presence is enough to show that the institution has my blessings Besides, I already blessed the institution when I came here last year[3] to lay the foundation stone. But now that I have been asked to speak, let me say that my blessings are conditional. I should like to impress on those in charge of this institution, the teachers and the girls that the institution will not last without a moral foundation. The workers should all be selfless workers and the education imparted here should be true education, that is to say, which draws out the best in the character of the taught. Every one of us has good inherent in the soul, it needs to be drawn out by the teachers, and only those teachers can perform this sacred function whose own character is unsullied, who are always ready to learn and to

[1] This and the following two items have been extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter"

[2] Jamnalal Bajaj declared open the hostel

[3] On May 31; *vide* Vol LXI, pp 118-9

grow from perfection to perfection The girls also will have to be receptive, they will not think of showing themselves off but of enabling their teachers to draw out the best in themselves. I have had bitter experience of institutions of this character and therefore hesitate to bless newly opened institutions I am even doubtful about the teachers needing my blessings. Some of them, I dare say, think of me as a back number, not in touch with the spirit of the age and modern tendencies and not at all competent to speak to the modern youth Well, let those who think like that reject what I have said.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

513. TALK WITH STUDENTS

NADIAD,
October 30, 1936

The girls of the institution[1] gathered in the afternoon to give Gandhiji their yarn spun on the occasion of his birthday There were boys, too, of the Vallabh Vidyalaya of Bochasan The girls gave 122,475 yards of yarn but, what is more, 60 of them took pledge to spin 100,000 yards during the year for their own clothing needs

[GANDHIJI:] You know that Seth Jamnalal Bajaj has opened your hostel today. You must try to be worthy of that good man. You perhaps know that he is a good man?

[GIRLS:] Oh, yes

No 'oh, yes' but 'yes, please'

'Yes, please,' they shouted in a chorus

But if he is a good man, what about the rest?

Everyone is good

Not including you?

We are good, too

All, without exception? Are you sure?

Yes, Sir.

Well, then, now tell me if any of you tell lies.

'We do,' said some of them

[1] Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya

Always or on occasions?

On certain occasions.

And don't you quarrel?

We do.

Always?

'Yes', which was drowned in hearty laughter.

Well, but I must say that you are good, because you are ready to confess that you sometimes tell lies and quarrel amongst yourselves. And the rest of us are also good only in that sense and no other But what about those who go about saying that everyone must tell the truth but who themselves never do so?

They are hypocrites

That's perfect. Let us never be hypocrites Now, one more question. You have taken a pledge to spin 100,000 yards during the year. What if you break the pledge?

'No fear,' they emphatically protested

But if you do?

'We know we will not," they rejoined with even greater emphasis.

But supposing you do?

(One voice) 'Fasting!'

Who is to fast? I or you?

We of course

Fasting on milk and fruit?

No, Sir We shall take only water.

But how many days will you fast?

So long as we do not finish our promised quota.

Splendid. But know that there are reporters here who will publish this talk of ours and you will have to rue it if you fail.

Then came the turn of Vallabh Vidyalaya boys—boys of the Dharala community who are being taught and given their board and lodging free The teacher presented to Gandhiji cloth woven out of the yarn spun from slivers carded on the 12th of October, from cotton purchased out of the wages they had earned from carding The teacher said that the boys did cleaning and sweeping of the streets as well.

Every day?

No, we did so on Gandhiji's birthday

Well, I tell you, if you do it every day you will make Bochasan a model village from the standpoint of sanitation and you may some day be Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Even if you fail to be Sardar Vallabhbhai, you will have done something good. But you may take it from me that if you do not do this street cleaning, you will never be Sardar Vallabhbhai.

'But,' said one of the boys, 'ours is a bad village It does not deserve these heroic measures We may clean the streets, but they will go on spoiling them '

Now, now, don't say so All villages are like that, and it is our duty to persevere the more, the more they persist in defiling the streets. And you must not forget that you belong to the village.

Harijan, 7-11-1936

514. SPEECH AT MUNICIPAL GIRLS' SCHOOL[1]

AHMEDABAD,
October 30, 1936

My heart is in Segaon. I am not interested in such things although I used to take interest in them before my life turned in a different direction.

He added that women's education should aid development of womanhood whereby women might lead pure life.

The Bombay Chronicle, 31-10-1936

515. VOLUNTEER BHANGIS

Let not the word Bhangi frighten any reader as it does many. [The] Bhangi is probably the most useful member of society. Its health depends more upon proper sanitation than perhaps on proper food. Needless to say I am not thinking of the Bhangi caste. I am thinking purely of the occupation that the word 'Bhangi' connotes. I regard the scavenger's or the cleaner's as a noble 'profession', nobler than the professions known as 'honourable'. They may easily become dishonourable; this never can.

[1] At the inauguration of the building

Well, Shri Appa Patwardhan who is an M. A. has become commander of a corps of volunteer Bhangis which he is trying to form for attending to the sanitation of the Congress camp at Faizpur The issue before the Reception Committee was whether to employ professional Bhangis or to have the sanitation attended to by volunteers Someone pointed out that at the previous Congress the work was done by the town Bhangis. But the volunteer scheme won the day. The task could not have been allotted to fitter hands. Appasaheb has qualified himself for it by long previous training and, what is more, by his love of the most despised member of society His love has not been purely sentimental. He has done the work of sanitation side by side with Bhangis, and he knows that proper scavenging is as much a science as any other. He has invited applications for the free services of two hundred persons not under 18 years of age for the work. They must be willing and ready to attend to the cleaning of latrines and the whole camp while the Congress work lasts. They must be zealous youths who won't neglect the duty entrusted to them for the sake of seeing the tamasha or the Congress delegates at work. Theirs will be the privilege of making the work of the delegates possible by attending to their sanitary comforts.

Maharashtra is a bee-hive of good hardy workers. It should not be difficult for the province to supply two hundred good and true young men to do the work. Not that young men from other provinces may not apply. But for the sake of economy, if nothing more, it is better to have young men from the province and, better still, the taluq or the district in which the Congress is held.

Harijan, 31-10-1936

516. WHOSE IS THE HUMILIATION?

From a long letter of a worker among Harijans I take the following paragraph:

> There is a growing discontent on the part of educated Harijans to call themselves Hindus Because if they say they are Hindus, they have to disclose their caste also, and the inferiority complex makes this unpleasant They would rather call themselves Christians than undergo humiliation by calling themselves Hindus Why may we not then ask them to become Sikhs or Buddhists and end the humiliation? For Sikhs and Buddhists are as good as Hindus.

The correspondent gives up his case when he says that Sikhs and Buddhists are as good as Hindus. For if that is so, there is no occasion to prompt Harijans or anyone else in the direction Any Hindu is free to call himself a follower of any one of the innumerable Hindu sects and yet remain Hindu. And why should a Hindu disclose his caste if he does not want to or if he has renounced caste? Many Hindus do not believe in caste. I have endeavoured to show that caste is no part of Hinduism. Varna is not caste, it is class. A man may call himself a Brahmin, i.e., a teacher of religion, if he is one in fact; or a Kshatriya, i e., a soldier, if he is one, or a Vaishya, i.e., a merchant or a farmer, if he is that; or a Shudra, i.e., an employee, if he is one. These divisions are not castes but classes and have reference to callings. There is no such class as untouchable. Hence an untouchable is not bound to say he is one. He may say if he wishes that Hindu society has regarded him as such but he does not recognize that distinction. I may say that though I have been classified by Hindu society as belonging to the Bania caste, I am not that, as I do not believe in caste, but that if I must call myself anything more than mere Hindu, I am a Harijan by choice, having made, so far as in me lies, common cause with Harijans.

And why is there any humiliation in a Harijan disclosing his classification made by Hindu society? Surely the humiliation is of the society that reduces its members to the condition of helots, consigned to ghettos and shunned by society. The very education of the Harijan should make him proud of the fact that he can truthfully call himself a Hindu even though so-called higher castes have denied their religion in their lives and persecuted him in a manner beyond description. If untouchability is destroyed root and branch and Hinduism lives, the future historian will assign the place of honour to Harijans who will have stood by their faith in spite of heartless persecution by their fellows. Each time, therefore, a Harijan has to say what he is classed as in Hindu society, the humiliation is not his but of his persecutors—the so-called caste Hindus.

Harijan, 31-10-1936

517. SPEECH AT LABOURERS' MEETING, AHMEDABAD

October 31, 1936

In 1918 some workers had become indifferent and had also weakened. To carry on a strike for twenty-one days—remaining peaceful, not even throwing a little stone at anyone—is a hard test for anyone. You passed through the test lasting 21 days. Then you weakened somewhat. Do you know what I had to do then and what the results were? For 21 days you carried the banner on which were written the words "Unbreakable Vow". Every day I asked you to remember God and do everything with Him as your witness; otherwise the time would have come for a person like me to die. As on the banner, so in the heart, "Unbreakable Vow" was written. You had all lost heart but you played your part well Anyone who wishes to keep a pledge should take it only after due deliberation and recognizing his limitations One should know one's own capacity and, as the saying goes, "You should stretch yourself according to the length of your bedspread." Do I need to explain this to labourers? For you always huddle up when you go to sleep. Everyone should have a seven-foot long bed, the labourer's may well be made of coir strings and the rich man's have silk webbing The rich may have a painted cot and yours may be [made of] babul wood, but everyone needs to stretch himself full length while sleeping. I can see that this is not the case today. Where is the room in your house for such a bed? Some of you may have it, but the majority do not And ,moreover, even if there is room for one such bed, the houses are not big enough to hold beds for your mother, wife, children, sister, and so on. You live in hovels You have always to live huddled up as one does when shivering with cold You have not room enough even to stretch your legs. At present this is the case everywhere. Here too we are able to huddle up We do not have the strength to soar high into the skies. Means have been invented for killing thousands of people with an explosion from the sky, but I do not want such power. We should not even wish for it. Even if it were possible to acquire the strength to destroy everything by a whiff, I would refuse such strength. But we should have the strength to keep a pledge, if we have taken one. It is enough

if we secure this strength. We are all children of the earth and it is only if we keep our vows that we can live on this earth preserving our self-respect. You had for twenty years that capacity to keep your vow. If tomorrow you lose this capacity which is your capital, you shall have lost your twenty years' earnings. It would be an asset if you could keep it unto death, otherwise all your achievements will come to nothing. Today there are multi-millionaires who become insolvent and take poison to end their lives. Isn't that so? A vow is worth more than a hundred millions. Its value can never be measured. You treasured that capital for twenty years. With the interest on it, it must have now doubled or trebled itself. We, however, cannot live on interest. We should be satisfied with what we have. It is enough that our principle remains intact. However, when this capital is lost you will become bankrupt.[1]

The question facing you seems to be this: Whether you have grown in strength or the mill-owners. If the mill-owners close the doors against arbitration, you may have to resort to a strike. They may want to try your strength. Now I should like to suggest to the mill-owners that if you grow in strength, they have nothing to be afraid of. If they grow in strength you have everything to be afraid of.

But let us see what differentiates us from the mill-owners. Their strength lies in their wealth. Ours in our capacity to work. Whereas they have the strength of money we have the strength of labour. They depend upon their money, we upon our labour. If labour did not co-operate with capital, not a single mill could function If you and I do not work in their mills, your brothers will go and work there. They will be able to procure workers with the help of money, threats, coercion or force. But the co-operation of labour will have to be secured. Otherwise their mills will come to a standstill. It is labour that holds the key. The labour union may not have it but you, the labourers do have it.

Although there may be crores of you, what could you do if you had no capital? What could you achieve if you had crores of rupees but not the talent to use them? You will also need people to manage these mills. I should not be able to run the industry even if someone gave me a crore of rupees. I would know how to use the sum for Harijan work or for pro-

[1] The paragraph that follows is from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter" in *Harijan*

ducing khadi. But I cannot run a model mill. It may well happen that a mill-owner might hand over a mill to me if I pleaded with him to do so. But even if someone did it I would not have the capacity to run it I wish you to acquire this capacity some day. But in twenty years you have not acquired it, and in another twenty you may not be able to do so It may well happen that one labourer may learn the trick and make the others his slaves. But the working class as a whole does not have this ability today. If you believe that you have now developed this capacity, you will no longer require a leader. I do not think you have it. And the day you do so, there will cease to be two isms. If you have it today, you have become capitalists. Capital and labour will become one when you become aware of your own capital. I am imagining a time when we shall bring about such a situation through a vow and this would be done not by breaking the heads of capitalists. Let those who preach class war say what they will. If I appreciated what they said, I would become one of them. However, even if I came to profess classs wars I would while doing so have to bring in many of my fads such as non-violence, truth and so on To me, of course, these are invaluable principles and not fads.

Even if we fight mill-owners, we are not to bear them ill will. If we fight them, we should do so in the same way as we would fight our father, mother, wife or children. We should struggle against them in the same way and for the same reason, as lovingly and reluctantly and with as much respect and politeness as we do against our blood-relations. The lessons which you learnt twenty years ago have still to be kept in mind. Mill-owners belong to the opposite camp. But we have to consider others besides them. Those who are known to all as blacklegs are traitors. Within no time they undo the labour of years. Instead of fighting them, we should plead with them, reason with them. It may well happen that they do not listen to you. It is all right if they walk away after hearing you; it would be even better if they came over to your side, but even if they do not, we have to bear with them.

There is another union here. It has sent me an open letter. Its substance is that you should merge in that union. Otherwise there will be two unions. I agree that in a place like Ahmedabad there is no room for two unions. It is easy to undo the work you have been doing for twenty years; it is not so easy to carry it on. If you wish to undo it, the Sabarmati is handy. It may be that one may become a president quicker

in the new union, you may even achieve some success, but do not yield to that temptation. The protagonists of class war may claim that co-operation is harmful. For us, co-operation is the first lesson. When non-co-operation with the Government was advocated it was not implied that there could be no co-operation in future. In fact non-co-operation with the Government was launched so that co-operation could at last become possible The day the Government becomes the servant of the people we should certainly co-operate with it Similarly, these people—mill-owners—can become our friends, but that will be when they give up their ism

My association with you is a lifelong one If unfortunately you have to non-co-operate, it should only be in order to return to co-operation. If we do not co-operate, both the parties will suffer. You will be put to hardship for nothing and the mill-owners too will suffer loss. It is my desire that Ahmedabad should become a thousand times greater than it is today and the prestige this city has today should be greatly multiplied It is a heterogeneous place It is my function to bring about harmony among its varied elements It is the function of us all. It is not for us to accentuate distinctions; it could be the work of class war enthusiasts. We should on our part plead with them to bear with a single union.

I am one of the arbitrators and as such I may not say anything regarding justice or injustice After all I am an optimist. I hope you will not be obliged to resort to a strike.[1] The mill-owners have not thrown their reason into the Sabarmati that they would be prepared to fight it out. If for twenty years they regarded this course of action as harmful, would it become all right overnight? I shall strain every nerve to avert a crisis However, what shall I do if the strain tells on the nerves? I shall then understand that God is going to give us a test. God perhaps wants to see whether or not the labourers keep their vow. Only then will it be known whether your pledge was a flute made of a carrot, which could be eaten if it did not work, or a real flute. Will a drunkard, a gambler or a dissolute character be able to keep his vow? We are after all your servants. We shall suffer for your sake. We shall receive blows along with you, if that

[1] *The Bombay Chronicle* reports here: "He was optimistic. He believed that they would not have to go on strike Sheth Kasturbhai Lalbhai, the President of the Mill-owners' Association, was going to see him today"

becomes necessary. However, it may happen that we shall be spared and you alone will be beaten. If you are beaten, we will nurse you. You yourselves will have to bear the final burden. We are only going to help you when you bear that burden. Whatever you do, do it intelligently and not through blind faith.

I believed that the key to swaraj lay with the labourers, but I now feel that it is not with them alone. Swaraj will not come so long as our poverty is not wiped out The magic cure for achieving this is in Segaon—in the villages It is a village of six hundred people Three out of every four persons there are Harijans. It has no railway station I have settled there because I believe it is untouched and not for my own pleasure. The happiness of the poor, of *Daridranarayana*, is all my pleasure They do not get even *rotlo*. And if they do, it is of poor quality, unbuttered and savoured with dirty salt. I can testify to this We must find out how we can rid them of their misery How can it be done while sitting here? You are in a much better position than they. There are no *chawls*[1], no schools, no hospitals like yours. Even for Mirabehn, no doctor would be available if we looked for one. On both sides there would be patients suffering from infectious diseases, and we lying between them. My faith, however, grows day after day.

The people of Segaon hold the key to your liberation. You are well aware of your plight. Those who have this awareness are not unhappy. But one who is not conscious of his plight is truly unhappy. He is himself a slave but knows not that he is one. His predicament is such that if you put ghee on his bread, he will get stomachache As you go farther from Segaon, you find the villages more and more exploited If I find the magic cure, I shall achieve everything I am not fond of making speeches If you depend upon me, I shall prove a false support You will have to forget me. I am going farther and farther away, and my interest in you is drying up because you do not have that key I shall have to go far to find that key. For me, there is no other happiness There is only one joy for me and that is to get a glimpse of God. This will be possible when I become one with the poor. I can be one with the whole world if I can merge myself in the poor people of a poor country This is my defence before the public. I am running away only to find the right key. I have

[1] Tenement houses

been a villager for years. I am a villager by temperament. I am therefore happy there. You cannot afford what I can. To-day I am being tested. I do not know whether or not I shall be able to live for a year in Segaon, how then can I advise others?

I have run far away. I have now served you notice not to depend upon me. Even if I have a telegram that I am needed, I may refuse to come. Even if the mill-owners request me to come, I may say no Anyone who comes to Segaon will get whatever services I can give. My *sadhana* and my *samadhi* are at Segaon. Even if the people of Segaon throw stones at me, my place will be there. At first, they did not even let me have water, now we are on slightly better terms. But the way is not clear I am not the person to run away from the thorny path. I shall sleep there as I would on a bed of flowers if I could get one You have to depend upon your own strength. You shall triumph if you fight with God's strength; if you fight with mine, you will fall into the ditch We are all servants, we serve to the best of our capacity. You should depend upon your own and God's strength.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 8-11-1936, and *Harijan*, 7-11-1936

518. SPEECH AT GUJARATI SAHITYA PARISHAD

AHMEDABAD,
October 31, 1936

What Bhai Munshi told you was not quite true. He told you that in 1925 I resolutely turned down the offer and refused the presidentship and further said that if such a request was repeated I would plead helplessness So far so good. But Munshi hastened to add that on this occasion I had accepted the presidentship as resolutely as I had declined it earlier. But this is not a fact, it is far from the truth. I was then not worthy of this honour and I am much less so now. I was not at all eager to accept this honour. However, I have accepted it, but reluctantly. I came because I was faced with a dilemma. When friends from whom I expect to take work put some burden on me, I persuade myself to assume it.

After accepting it I fell ill[1]. I sent word asking to be excused and suggesting that they should go ahead with this session

[1] On December 7, 1935, *vide* Vol LXII, p 169.

without me. But as I am a Mahatma, who would accept this suggestion? Who knows in whose heart I may be a Mahatma! However, to my own self I have already become an *alpatma*[1]. The Mahatma's word did not avail Once I fell ill and could not attend the session. And now another difficulty came up. Two of my friends in Segaon fell ill and I thought that if I failed to go, I would now be an *alpatma* for the *alpatmas* too The Shastras say that a commitment made under certain circumstances may not be operative under certain other circumstances. But I am in the habit of keeping my word to the letter; so I have come. But the patients have survived and I am sitting here.

I had hoped that, before coming to the Conference, I would gather all the literature and read it and prepare my speech after reading it all. Today, however, I am bankrupt. I could not prepare my speech and sent word that they should not hope for a written address. At Segaon, I could not leave my patients unattended; I had then hoped for some peace in Rajkot, where however, every minute was occupied When I came here, I learnt that there was a conflagration—the dispute between the mill-owners and the labour was raging I had also hoped that I would look through something at night. I even had the necessary material sorted out, but I was engaged in important matters right up to the time of my arrival here Hence I have not even made the necessary preparation for an impromptu speech Has the Conference ever made a worse choice?

This is said to be the twelfth session. But I am afraid I won't be performing the twelfth day rites[2] of the Conference! That inauspicious word has fallen to my lot I am however in fact lucky Various kinds of hopes are kindled wherever I happen to go. It is hoped I would help give things a new form And if this happens, will it not be as good as doing away with the present idea of the session? I have received some Press-clippings.[3] Twelve amendments to the constitution have been

[1] One with a small soul, as opposed to mahatma

[2] The pun is on *barmun* which as an adjective means 'twelfth' and as a noun 'the twelfth-day rites after death'

[3] There had been much criticism in the Press about the so-called 'undemocratic' character of the constitution of the Gujarati Literary Conference, and it was also said that the constitution was too rigid or too cleverly drafted by Munshi to permit any improvement

sent to me. Although I have gone through them, I have come here without studying the constitution Hence if some legal pundit raises any problem, I shall be perplexed

There are twelve items before us on today's agenda. My speech is one of them. All these have to be completed before half past five.

Having made these introductory remarks, I express my gratitude for the burden imposed on me. Even if the master gives a kick, the servant apologizes to the former and admits that he had made some mistake and had to be kicked My masters number 33 crores They have not elected me to serve them but I regard myself as their servant You too are included in those crores And, you are doubly my masters as you have elected me. However, I have come in the hope that you will somehow put up with me.

I have been unable to go through what appeared in the newspapers about me and the Press-clippings which were sent to me. I must, however, read the letters which I get. I should read them if only for the sake of courtesy I am regarded as a democrat and I am one Hence these people put their faith in me. They pleaded that Munshi was responsible for the constitution of the Conference, that it might be regarded as his monopoly. As he is a legal expert, he has so constructed it that we cannot alter a single brick. Something can be done, however, if I can shift one or two bricks I may effect certain changes by exercising pressure, willingly or otherwise Besides this, there were some other suggestions too I have not been able to digest these suggestions.[1]

I believe I am a democrat and as such I understand what can be democratic and what not Even when the Congress constitution was drafted, someone objected that they did not want to pay four annas as membership fee I told them that if they had a conscientious objection to paying the fee, they need not want to be members of the Congress. Supposing we had a people's bank—not the usual type of a business concern, but a real people's bank—how should we run it on democratic principles? We should have to employ there men not democratically elected, but men of proved integrity and character, ready to work for the people's welfare Then take the instance of High Courts, which we will have even under *Ramarajya*. Must the

[1] The following paragraph has been taken from the English version published in *Harijan*

constitution of a High Court also be democratic? Even under true democracy there will be institutions which, in the interests of democracy itself, will have to be run on other than democratic lines. I do know where democracy can function and where it cannot. Similarly, literary conferences too cannot be run on wholly democratic lines. . . .

Though I am joking, I want to talk to you of serious matters. But by telling you of such things, should I make you cry? I do not have such seriousness. I should be incapable of such seriousness even if I was about to be hanged Hence, even if I make you laugh, you must listen to me in all seriousness.

Although I am a democrat, I say such conferences cannot be run on democratic lines. They may have the spirit of democracy, but not its procedures. I shall be dead by the time the children, women and old men who are now regarded as totally illiterate come to understand the meaning of democracy. But those who will be living then should remember that democratic practices cannot apply to such an institution. If they were applied, it would cease to be democracy and become mobocracy. Hence I must say all this in all humility to those who have written to me asking me to make these changes if I want democracy. This however does not mean that the present constitution which is the creation of Munshi is his monopoly. I have read that constitution. I am famous for drawing up constitutions at a moment's notice But I am hardly a legal expert! Hence my language is that of the villager, but I can mould it so that both legal experts as well as the common man can understand it I have not yet mortgaged my senses, I can therefore say that Munshi has no monopoly in this constitution [1]

You say it has been framed with such consummate cleverness that no one may change a comma or colon in it I refuse to believe it. No such constitution has ever been drafted There is no constitution through which one may not drive a coach and four if one so wills. I do not know of a perfect constitution having ever been drafted Perfection is the attribute of the Almighty, and yet what a great democrat He is! What an amount of wrong and humbug He suffers on our part! He even suffers us, insignificant creatures of His, to question His very existence, though He is in every atom about us, around us and within us But He has reserved

[1] The two paragraphs that follow have been taken from the English version published in *Harijan*.

to Himself the right of becoming manifest to whomsoever He chooses. He is a Being without hands and feet and other organs, yet He can be seen by him to whom He chooses to reveal Himself.

We are a subject nation and Munshi is one of us Munshi cannot conjure into being a constitution of the kind you suggest But even in Russia, Italy and elsewhere there is no constitution which cannot be altered. Constitutions may indeed be upheld by force of arms, but a flawless constitution is an impossibility. I shall therefore make certain suggestions in order to help you to introduce whatever changes you deem necessary. All that will be under the constitution. You will please trust me to suggest a proper *via media*.

I have a suggestion for those who wish to make changes in the constitution of this Parishad Worth-while amendments cannot be made within these two days. However reluctantly, I am the President. I know the President's prerogative. And, I am well aware of the responsibilities. But who is the real president?

Turning towards Anandshankarbhai

This Vice-president is the real person. I am only a figurehead. He had written to me that he would spare me although I was the President. Hence he will take care of all that is to be done. The constitution cannot be amended in a couple of days. Nor can we burden Anandshankarbhai with this responsibility In order that the Conference may not come to nothing—and this shall not happen so long as I am the President—I shall summon all the skill that I can and recommend amendment of the constitution. But I cannot be sure that I shall succeed. Whatever I shall point out will be in conformity with the constitution. I would never say anything deceitful. I have always had the strength to tell the plain truth straight. I shall point out those changes which may be made in a straightforward manner, in a manner which will be a hundred per cent straight.

Now, my address. What should I say to the *litterateurs*? Of me Sir Chinubhai has already said that I am neither a scholar nor a literary figure. However, I am the *Kulapati*[1] of the Vidyapith; I was instrumental in having the *Jodanikosha*[2] prepared. Sir Chinubhai referred to the Vidyapith in the past

[1] Chancellor
[2] Gujarati Dictionary

tense. I shall beg leave to inform him that the Vidyapith still exists and will continue to exist. It is not a passing phase. The Vidyapith will continue to function so long as we do not forget the *mantra* of swaraj. The Vidyapith may become a mobile institution like the Ashram. Someone happened to donate two and a half lakhs of rupees, and there was a building. But would not the Vidyapith have functioned had this building not been there? The Vidyapith existed even when there were no funds. It was founded in the past, it exists in the present and shall do so in the future. It has undergone transformations and these will continue. Gidwani[1] is no longer there, nor are Kripalani[2] or Kaka There are villagers in it. But may only scholars run the Vidyapith? A man may well be a villager. He should be a villager at heart and not merely posing as one. There is a community in Kathiawar called Validas who will perform any part they are asked to perform. It is not people such as these but those who truly have the heart of a villager who can run the Vidyapith. The Vidyapith is not meant for the painted dolls and dandies of Ahmedabad. Bhai Ambalal's daughter[3] may have joined it. But the Vidyapith is not a 'depot' to which dolls would come to be decorated only to be 'delivered' to their parents just as they had come, i e , returned to their care The Vidyapith has been formed to build up countrymen and countrywomen They do not know how to do it, but they are trying all the same. Of such people, it is said in the sixth chapter of the *Gita*, that they will not 'meet with a sad end'.[4] This is a Divine assurance and it must apply in the case of the faithful Through its contribution in the past, the Vidyapith has fully rewarded those who donated funds to it. But, Sir Chinubhai, I wish to tell you that, if the Vidyapith has fully rewarded donors, you will see that it will also continue to do so in the future.

Now with regard to the Conference. What should it do? What hopes should I have of it? Kaka had written nine pages for my benefit about this Although I have gone through these, I cannot recall anything. Dr. Hariprasad wrote a letter, but it is running around somewhere. It must be safe somewhere but I could not get at it when starting for this place. I asked him to

1 Choithram Gidwani
2 J B Kripalani
3 Mridula Sarabhai
4 *Bhagavad Gita*, VI. 40

write it down again. He did and sent it to me but I received it after I had gone to bed and I have not brought it here. Hence, I cannot give anything that he has suggested Such is my misfortune. Do I have the time to cook and lay the table? But, whatever I say just now is appropriate for me, if not altogether so. Because I speak what comes from my heart, without gilding my words

The Chairman of the Reception Committee has lightened my burden. He has repeated to you what I had earlier told the Literary Conference He did so on the assumption that perhaps I might have to whip you. But, would a devotee of non-violence resort to whipping? I would not possess a whip. I had then been only polite [1]

For whose sake are we going to have our literature? For Kasturbhai & Co.? For Ambalalbhai or Sir Chinubhai? Not certainly for the great gentry of Ahmedabad They can afford to engage literary men and have great libraries in their homes. But what about the poor man at the well who with unspeakable abuse is goading his bullocks to pull the big leather-bucket? Years ago I had asked Sjt Narasinharao[2], who I am sorry is too aged and ill to be here in our midst, if he could give me something, some inspired tunes or ditties, which this man at the well could lustily sing and forget for ever the filthy abuse in which he indulged without knowing that it was abuse? What can I say to him? Anyone who is a poet should approach him. Munshi is a novelist, he cannot do so Only an extraordinary artist can go and persuade him A couple of words here and a couple of words there and he would put the thing in a way that he will be able to catch the meaning. And, Ramanbhai[3] is not even alive today.[4]

That man belonged to Kochrab, where we had the beginnings of our Satyagr Ahashram But Kochrab is no village, it is a slum of Ahmedabad. Jivanlalbhai had a bungalow there Who else but a ghost like me would go to live there? Moreover, who could have given him a higher rent in those days? But they wanted me to stay there and so Jivanlalbhai offered me his bungalow and Sheth Mangaldas promised monetary help. Now

[1] The following paragraph has been taken from *Harijan,* with a sentence or two from the Gujarati.

[2] Narasinharao Bholanath Divatia

[3] Ramanbhai Nilkanth

[4] The following paragraph has been taken from *Harijan* with some addition from the Gujarati.

I have hundreds of such folks for whom I want real life-giving literature. How am I to do so? I live in Segaon today where in a population of 600 a little over ten are literate, certainly not more than fifty, very likely less. Of the ten or more who can read, there are scarcely three or four who can understand what they read, and among the women there is not one who is literate.

The place is absolutely untouched by Wardha I would have moved farther away had that been the case There we have only malaria. But I have an understanding with malaria that it cannot stay on wherever I go. There are many puddles there. But I came across a wealthy person[1] who had a road built People like Anandshankarbhai could not have visited the place under the conditions prevailing six months ago.[2]

Seventy-five per cent of the population are Harijans. I have to justify my position as *Kulapati* of the Vidyapith Now I thought of setting up a little library for them. The books had to be of course within their understanding, and so I begged a dozen school books from two or three girls who had no use for them

I could make you laugh a great deal if I spoke to you about the authors of those worthless text-books and I could talk about them for hours but we don't have the time.

The place is a part of Maharashtra. There is not as much illiteracy as in Gujarat, but Segaon is almost entirely illiterate. I have with me a young man[3] who is an LL.B. but who has forgotten all his law and cast in his lot with me. He is from Gujarat but knows some Marathi He goes to the village and reads to those who come to him from these books whatever they can follow and digest. He takes a newspaper or two with him. But how is he to make them follow our newspapers? What do they know of Spain and of Russia? What do they know of geography? The place which houses these books worth three and half rupees is such that one cannot sit under the roof during the monsoon. If anyone applied a match-stick, it would go up in flames. It was really Mirabehn's hut. Mirabehn is a self-sacrificing person but foolish. I had told her that she would not be able to live in a place where people defecated. I would live only on the outskirts I must have pure air, pure water and pure food. That is my condition for living in a village. Fortunately

[1] Jamnalal Bajaj

[2] What follows is taken from *Harijan*, with some extracts from the Gujarati

[3] Munnalal G. Shah

the open place where I live is not used by the people for answering nature's call. But in that hut belonging to Mirabehn we set up a library.

What am I to read to them? Munshi's novels? Or *Krishnacharita* which Sjt. Krishnalal Zaveri has translated from the Bengali? It is a good book but I am afraid I cannot place it before these illiterate folks They would take time to understand it. This is unfortunate no doubt but ought not you writers to know it from me? Who else will tell you this?

You must know that much as I should have loved to bring with me a Segaon boy here, I have not done so. I would have brought one if I paid his fare But what would he do here? He would find himself in a strange world. But I am here as his representative, as those village folks' representative, unsolicited, unelected. That is true democracy I shall one day ask you to go with me there I am clearing the way for you. Of course the road is strewn with thorns, but I shall see that the thorns will not be without roses too

As I am speaking to you just now, I am put in mind of Dean Farrar and his book on the life of Christ. I may fight the British rule, but I do not hate the English or their language In fact I appreciate their literary treasures. And Dean Farrar's book is one of the treasures of the English language. You know how he laboured to produce that book? He read everything about Jesus in the English language, and then he went to Palestine, saw every place and spot in the Bible that he could identify, and then wrote the book in faith and prayer, for the masses in England, in a language which all of them could understand It is not in Dr Johnson's style but in the easy style of Dickens Have we men like Farrar who will produce great literature for the village folk? Our literary men will pore over Kalidasa and Bhavabhuti, and English authors, and will give us imitations. I want them to go to villages, study them and give something life-giving. If, while enjoying such works they develop consumption, sprue or blood-pressure, they will still be tempted to go on. If then they set out to write books for the villages, their works will be as diseased as they are themselves. Villages have no use for such persons. They need thoroughly practical men such as described by Narmadashankar. Those who go and live in villages as true villagers are needed there more than persons like me who go there with their own thermos flasks; such persons can provide living literature to the people.

Men like Ravishankar Raval splash their brushes comfortably in Ahmedabad, what would they do if they went to the villages?

Though I was happy and proud to see what I saw in the exhibition this morning, and felt that I had not seen anything of the kind before in Gujarat, let me tell you that I missed what I would call a painting that speaks. Why should I need an artist to explain a work of art to me? Why should it not speak out to me itself? I tell you what I mean. I saw in the Vatican art collection a statue of Christ on the Cross which simply captured me and kept me spell-bound I saw it five years ago but it is still before me. There was no one there to explain its charm to me. Here in Belur in Mysore, I saw in the ancient temple a bracket in stone made of a little statuette which spoke out to me without anyone to help me to understand it. It was just a woman, half-naked, struggling with the folds of her clothes to extricate herself from the shafts of Cupid who is after all lying defeated at her feet in the shape of a scorpion. I could see the agony on the form—the agony of the stings of the scorpion. That at any rate was my interpretation of it, though Sjt Ravishankar may have another to offer.

I could speak on to you for hours telling you what I want. I want art and literature that can speak to the millions. I have given you an outline of the picture You will fill in the details I have said my say My heart is weeping at the present moment, but time has made it hard enough not to break even when there are occasions for it. As I think of Segaon and its skeletons,

At this stage he did, however, break down! After a little pause he continued

as I think of Segaon and its folk, I can't help saying that our literature is a miserable affair Principal Anandshankar Dhruva sent me a list of a hundred books, but none of them would do for them. What am I to place before them? And their women! Is there any relation, I wonder, between them and the Ahmedabad ladies I see in front of me? The Segaon women know no literature. They cannot even repeat the Ramadhun with me They simply know how to drudge and slave away. Reckless of sun or rain, of snakes or scorpions, they fetch water, they cut grass and hew wood, and look upon me as their benefactor if I give them work and a few coppers. They don't have an Ambalalbhai to help them with a few coppers. What

am I to take to these dumb sisters? Those dumb millions do not live in Ahmedabad but in the Indian villages. The five per cent who are literate have a vocabulary of hardly a hundred words or two. I know what to take to them. But I cannot tell you. I am no speaker, neither is the pen my profession. I have written what I have, because I could not help it, and at one time I was dumb, so much so that my friends used to call me a dunce, until I went to the courts where too it was with difficulty that I opened my lips. It is not my business to speak or to write. My business is to live amongst them and show them how to live. The key to swaraj is not in the cities but in the villages, and so I have settled in a village—a village, too, which I did not go seeking, but which came to me.[1]

Likewise I had not gone around looking for satyagraha. Many of the women from this village give their love to me much against my will. If, however, I were to accept their love, my vow of faithfulness to my wife would be put to shame, hence, I regard them as my mothers I know them as such and worship them as such. I invite you to the temple of these mothers.

Turning towards Keshavlal Dhruva:

Keshavlalbhai, I invite you too.

[K.] Then please grant me longer life as well.

But then I also must live equally long. There is not much difference in our ages.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 22-11-1936, and *Harijan*, 14-11-1936

[1] The paragraphs that follow have been taken from the Gujarati.

519. LETTER TO VITHAL L PHADKE

AHMEDABAD,
November 2, 1936

CHI. MAMA,

Please explain my predicament to the Harijan brethren who would be disappointed at my not coming My soul is in Segaon, and I came here because I had to. I will leave for Segaon as soon as the work here is finished. I shall certainly try to come to Godhra if God grants me another opportunity.

There is nothing wrong in putting away the money that the Harijan brethren have raised for the temple. Only it should be seen to that it is safe. It should bring in interest which should then be added to the principal. The simplest possible temple of my imagination would be for us to find a priest with a pure heart and the place where he conducts the worship should be our temple We may make this idea as vivid as we like. We should not be in a hurry to spend money on building a temple. It would be all right spending money, if there was any, on building a temple if it could be used as a place of worship, a school, a meeting place for village elders and a public rest-house. For the rest, if we would only realize it, we all carry a temple in our hearts.

Blessings from
BAPU

From a photostat of the Gujarati: G.N. 3837

520 SPEECH AT THE CONCLUDING SESSION OF THE TWELFTH GUJARATI SAHITYA PARISHAD, AHMEDABAD[1]

November 2, 1936

At the outset, I must thank you all. Ordinarily, a president always expresses his gratitude, but I do not do so as a matter of tradition. I came here because of your love for me. I did not even give you the time which I should have given you. I made an

[1] A summary of the speech by Mahadev Desai was also published in *Harijan*, 21-11-1936

extempore, undigested and worthless speech[1]. For this, I should beg your forgiveness. I express my heart-felt gratitude to you for having put up with me.

It is not that I do not like to read good essays. I have some interests which I cannot satisfy. A good many of these have become extinguished, but those that are still alive will keep showing up on every occasion so long as I have not been able to see God. Anandshankarbhai told me that a poetry symposium was held here and even young men participated fully. I had wished to go to the lecture on the archaeological work in Indore. But I neither went to the lecture nor attended the poetry symposium. What can it be but generosity on your part that you have put up with all these failings of mine?

On hearing about the donations for prizes, I was reminded of Carnegie who endowed a large library in Scotland. Professors in Scotland told him: 'If you want to make a donation, why insist on a library? You know about business; what can you know of these matters?' I, too, would tell our philanthropists that if they want to make sure that their money would be well spent they should give us donations without attaching any conditions.

Today, we have a spate of novels. Reading of novels has become a passion. These are sprouting like mushrooms. If you want to know how a novel is written, I can tell you a good deal about it. But it cannot be described before civilized men and women. One's imagination can run riot, it knows no restraints. However, we can do without these novels. The Gujarati language will not be widowed without them. At present it is indeed in a state of widowhood. When I went to South Africa, I took some Gujarati books with me. Taylor's Gujarati Grammar was one of them. I liked it very much. This time, too, on the critical night before the Conference, I had taken it out in order to read it. But where was the time to read it? I remember the epilogue to that grammar. Taylor asks in it, "Who said that Gujarati was inadequate?" "Gujarati, the accomplished daughter of Sanskrit, how could it be inadequate?" And he concluded: "As the speaker, so the language." It is not its inherent poverty that Gujarati reflects but the poverty of the people speaking it. That poverty cannot be wiped out through novels Our language is hardly going to be redeemed through an increase of books like *Nandabatrisi*.

I live in a village and so I can acquaint you with my hunger as a villager. While doing my matriculation I read a book on

[1] *Vide* pp. 407-17.

astronomy, but no one then asked me to look at the sky. Kakasaheb is a man of keen interests. In Yeravda jail, he used to gaze at the stars every night. I wondered what he could be gazing at. But after his release I too asked for books on the subject. I wanted a Gujarati book and I even found one although worthless. But how could that appease my hunger? Could we not give to our villagers a book on astronomy which they could understand?

But not to speak of astronomy, do we even have books on geography which they could understand? The fact is that we have not paid any attention to the villages. Although we are dependent upon them for our food and clothing, we behave as if we were their masters. We have given no thought whatsoever to their requirements. Is there any other country which is so impoverished that it carries on its business in a foreign language while ignoring its own? It is for this very reason that our country continues to be poor and our language is in a state of widowhood. There is not a single book in French or German, which soon after its publication is not translated into English. Abridged versions of the best classics are produced in large numbers for children Have we anything like that in Gujarati? If that were the case, I would bless it.

I had wanted to introduce a resolution on this subject, but now I shall be content with merely making the suggestion. I entreat our writers to begin writing for our dumb masses rather than for our city-dwellers. I am the self-appointed representative of that dumb public. On their behalf, I ask you to take a plunge into that field. You may be writing entertaining stories but these are not going to make any impression upon their minds. We have a school for village workers. I asked its teacher to study the tools used in a craft before teaching it, to understand how a *basala*[1] is made. If you wish to develop your mind, you should study village implements, understand their good points and bad points and then write about them. Those whose minds are fresh will find new things to see and to learn in villages. It is not true that your mental development becomes stunned when you go to the villages. My reply to those who say this would be that they must have gone there with closed minds. Actually the village, and not the city, is the place for the development of the mind.

I shall say something here which I said yesterday in the Subjects Committee. I received a letter from Shrimati Lilavati Desai on behalf of the Jyoti Sangh. Although I approve of the substance of the letter I did not like its language. Its substance was that what was written about women was painful to them. The

[1] Carpenter's tool used for trimming wood

description of women which was found in current literature was a distorted one. These women in exasperation asked whether God had created them in order that men could describe their bodies? When they were dead would they embalm their bodies? There was no reason to believe that they were created to cook and clean utensils. Someone had picked out some striking quotations from *Manusmriti* and sent these to her. He had picked out from *Manusmriti* whatever disparaging things could be said against women. Some women, poor souls, themselves admitted that they were helpless, uncouth and like cattle—but for this reason, could that description apply to all women? Why could not someone else have interpolated such ugly verses in *Manusmriti*?

Now these women ask the question why they are not described as they really are. They are neither Rambhas, celestial maidens, nor slave girls. They too are independent human beings like men. Why should the latter describe them as if they were dolls? Why do not men think of their mothers when they talk of women? There was a time when a large number of women stayed with me. In South Africa I had become a father or brother of women belonging to about sixty families. There were pretty women as well as plain ones amongst them. Although these women were illiterate, I brought out the courage in them and they went to jail as bravely as men.

I ask you to change your point of view. I am told that current literature is full of apotheosis of women. I do not want such wrong apotheosis, such descriptions of their eyes, nose, ears and other features. Do you ever describe your mother's features? I suggest that before you put your pens to paper keep your mother before your eyes. If you do that the literature which will flow from your pen will be like the rain which nurtures the thirsty mother earth. But today, instead of giving peace and encouragement to her, you enrage her. She poor soul feels that she is not as she is described, how can she become so? Are such descriptions an essential part of literature? Do we find anything vulgar in the Upanishads, the Koran or the Bible? Do we find any such thing in Tulsidas? Are these great epics not literature? Is the Bible not literature? It is said that the English language consists of three parts Bible and one part Shakespeare. Where would the English language be without the Bible or, for that matter, Arabic without the Koran, or Hindi without Tulsi? Why do you not produce such literature? Reflect upon what I have said here, give it a thought and, if you find it meaningless, reject it.

[From Gujarati]

Harijanbandhu, 20-12-1936

521. ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS[1]

SABARMATI,
[*November 2, 1936*][2]

Q. The work of removing untouchability seems to be insuperable How exactly are we to tackle it?

A. Silent plodding. I better tell you how I am doing it in Segaon. I do not preach to them, but work away never thinking of the result. The one condition is that you should not harbour untouchability in any shape or form. I have made it a point to have as many Harijans about me as possible. They come as servants but they soon know that they are brothers to us. We tolerate no distinction between Harijans. Though I cannot present you with tangible results of this silent service, I may safely say that there is a marked change for the better among all—Harijans and the orthodox Hindus.

Q. It is not quite easy for the Harijans to leave their village where they feel like doing so, as in Kavitha How can they get work?

A. I still adhere to my advice. We should be ashamed of asking them to stay on in the village and suffer the continuing persecution. It should not be impossible for us to find work for them. The number of those who will migrate will never be large

Q The Bhangis' lot is pitiable in many places How can they secure their elementary rights from Municipalities?

A. They must know that they are not bound to serve under all conditions. They may leave the work if the Municipality will not listen to them. But we have to settle down in their midst and educate them and not make reckless attempts to drive them to strike work. They must be taught to know that they have friends. Whilst they like others have the right to go on strike, they should know its limitations. They should be taught to regard their work as equally dignified with all other social services I have no

[1] Extracted from Mahadev Desai's "Weekly Letter". The questions were asked by a group of Harijan workers of Gujarat and Kathiawar who were spending a month at Harijan Ashram, Sabarmati, learning carding and spinning

[2] The date is from *Gandhi : 1915-48.*

doubt that they are the most neglected social servants and deserve every assistance we can render them.

Q. What is the outlook, in view of the precarious financial position of our Ashrams and institutions today?

A. It is not our financial position but our moral position that is precarious. You know the instances of moral lapse that have occurred. Purity is the only social foundation No movement or activity that has the sure foundation of purity of character of its workers, is ever in danger of coming to an end for want of funds. Then we in Gujarat have to realize that we must not always depend only on our monied men. We have to tap humbler resources. Our middle classes and even poor classes support so many beggars, so many temples, why will they not support a few good workers? We must beg from door to door, beg grain, beg copper coins, do as they do in Bihar and Maharashtra. In Maharashtra they have paisa funds and *mushti*[1] funds. It will be the finest form of propaganda among caste Hindus. But remember everything will depend on the singleness of your purpose, your devotion to the task and the purity of your character. People won't give for such work unless they are sure of our selflessness.

Q. What about the Harijans turned Christians who are today no better than Harijans?

A. Everything will be all right the moment untouchability disappears. When there is no untouchability, there will be no occasion for them to label themselves otherwise than as Hindus. I am talking of nominal Christians. If we put our own house in order, we need have no anxiety about Harijans changing religion as people change clothes.

Q If it is impossible to get the caste Hindus' co-operation in anti-untouchability work, would it not be better to take up the village industries work?

A. That is a delusion. You may be sure that he who gives up Harijan work on a pretext like that will be able to do less for the village industries work. You can't settle down in a village and miss the Harijans who are the foundation of society.

Harijan, 28-11-1936

[1] Literally, 'a handful'

ADDENDA

1. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON, WARDHA,
July 21, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

Your fears about Kanu came true. Since you have written to me, I am sending him with an escort. I am no doubt unhappy about it but feel that at the moment God wills it that way.

The snake that bit Satyavan was not a snake in the physical sense; the snake was lust. Savitri got the venom out by her purity and love. That is the mystery of the story of Savitri. A person whose purity can overcome lust in another can overcome anything. You should thus by your purity and by your love become fit to overcome the threefold afflictions of Ramdas. That is my wish.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

2. LETTER TO NIRMALA GANDHI

SEGAON,
July 25, 1936

CHI. NIMU,

This time your going away pricks me a lot. I liked your staying with me. The next place I would have liked is Sabarmati. But your dharma clearly is to go to Bombay and serve Ramdas. So go there, look after your health, be happy, remain cheerful and, as Ramdas wants, become his teacher. I have already explained to you what it was Savitri saved Satyavan from, haven't I? Save Ramdas in the same way. Do not worry about Kanam. Keep on writing to me regularly at least once a week.

A letter for Ramdas is enclosed. I could not at all find time to write to him earlier.

Blessings from
BAPU

From the Gujarati original: Nirmala Gandhi Papers. Courtesy: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library

3. LETTER TO SATYANAND BOSE[1]

[July 30, 1936][2]

DEAR SATYANAND BABU,

I quite agree with you that the Congress has to respond to variations in public opinion Pandit Jawaharlal is wide awake and handling the questions as they arise. My work is strictly limited to advising those who find it necessary to refer certain matters to me.

I would therefore like you to pass on your views to Pandit Nehru.

Yours sincerely,
M. K. GANDHI

From a copy. Pyarelal Papers. Courtesy: Pyarelal

[1] Although it is explained in the footnote on p 184 that the letter to the addressee referred to in the text is not traceable, it is possible that this is the letter meant, a copy of which became available after the volume was sent to the press.

[2] Pyarelal has kept this letter with those of 1936

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CHRONOLOGY

(June 1, 1936 — November 2, 1936)

June 2, 1936: Bangalore Gandhiji issued public appeal to Muslim friends in connection with Harilal Gandhi's conversion to Islam.

June 9: Abbas Tyabji died in Mussoorie.

June 10: Gandhiji gave interview to Adi-Karnataka Sangh Deputation. In the evening addressed Harijan Workers' Conference at Kengeri.

June 11: Had interview with M. V. Jambunathan.

June 12: Addressed Harijan Workers' Conference, Kengeri. Presided over Hindi Prachar Sabha. Visited Institute of Science, Bangalore. Left Bangalore.

June 13: Arrived in Madras *en route* to Wardha. Visited Hindi Prachar Sabha Bhavan under construction.

June 14: Reached Wardha in the morning.

June 16: Arrived at Segaon.

June 27: Congress Working Committee met at Wardha. Gandhiji arrived in Wardha but did not attend the meeting.

June 29–30: At Wardha. Had discussions with Jawaharlal Nehru.

June 30–July 4: At Wardha.

July 5: At Wardha, presided over Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad. Returned to Segaon in the evening.

July 15: Public meeting in Calcutta with Tagore in chair proposed amendment of Communal Award.

July 17: Gandhiji gave message to khadi workers.

July 19: Met students of Village Workers' Training School

July 30: Endorsed appeal for funds for Harijan Sevak Sangh.

August 2: Abdul Ghaffar Khan released.

August 4: Dharmanand Kosambi and Abdul Ghaffar Khan called on Gandhiji.

August 11: C. Rajagopalachari resigned from Congress.

August 16: C. Rajagopalachari and Jawaharlal Nehru called on Gandhiji.

August 27: Gandhiji attended A. I. S. A. meeting. Had talks with Jawaharlal Nehru.

August 28: Attended A. I. S. A. meeting. Had talks with C. Rajagopalachari.

August 30: Jayaprakash Narayan called on Gandhiji. Harilal as Abdulla preached Islam.

August 31: Gandhiji had an attack of malaria.

September 2: Sent a message to World Peace Conference.

September 3–11: In hospital at Wardha.

September 12: Returned to Segaon.

September 17: Harilal fined in Madras for drunkenness.

September 21: Gandhiji sent blessings to Zohra Ansari on her wedding.

September 24: Wrote Preface to *Gitapadarthkosha.*

October 3 : Received Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Rajendra Prasad.

October 7. A. I. V. I. A. meeting.

October 12: Gandhiji had talks with students and teachers of Maganwadi Vidyalalya, Wardha.

October 23: Left Segaon for Banaras.

October 24: Arrived in Banaras.

October 25: Banaras. Performed the opening ceremony of Bharat Mata Mandir Presented a commemoration volume to Maithilisharan Gupta on his golden jubilee.
Visited Kalabhavan and Nagari Pracharini Sabha.

October 27: Arrived in Delhi.
Met Mrs. Ansari and ailing mother of Brijkrishna Chandiwala.
Left for Ahmedabad.

October 28: Arrived in Ahmedabad.

October 29: Arrived in Rajkot. Met his cousin Khushalchand Gandhi.
Addressed a meeting of Harijan Workers

October 30: At Nadiad. Spoke at the inauguration of Vithal Kanya Vidyalaya Hostel. Arrived in Ahmedabad. Inaugurated the building of Municipal Girls' School.

October 31: Spoke at the Labourers' Meeting. Visited Art Exhibition.
Presided over Twelfth Gujarati Sahitya Parishad.

November 1: Presided over the convocation of Gujarat Vidyapith. Attended meeting of the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad.

November 2: Addressed the concluding session of the Twelfth Gujarati Sahitya Parishad. Left for Baroda on his way to Segaon.
At Baroda, called on the Tyabji family.

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